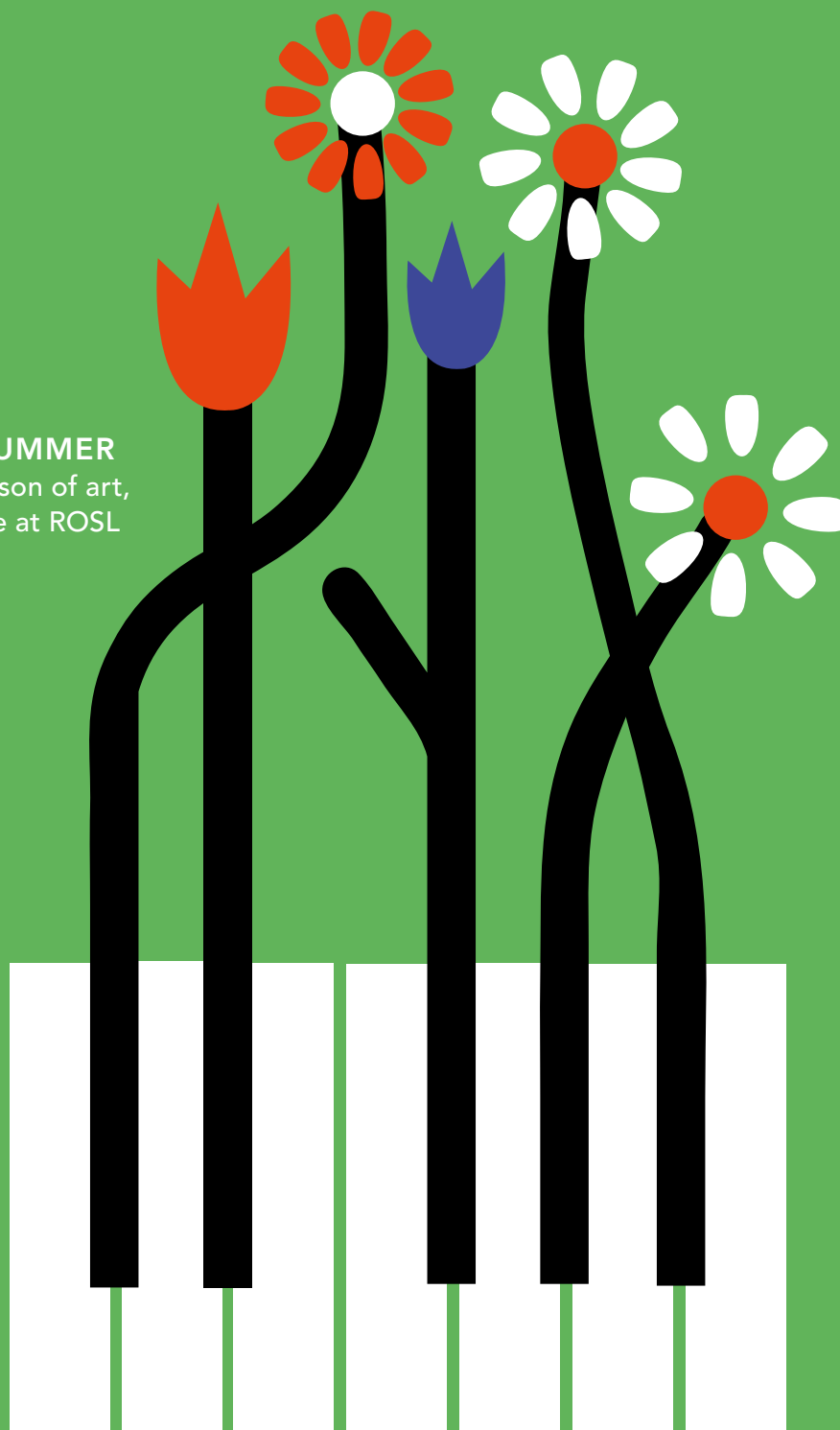


# OVERSEAS

THE JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE

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The Royal Over-Seas League is dedicated to championing international friendship and understanding through cultural and education activities around the Commonwealth and beyond. A not-for-profit private members' organisation, we've been bringing like-minded people together since 1910.

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WELCOME



## “Her Majesty’s service to the Commonwealth has been unparalleled”

This is of course a year of celebration for the Royal Over-Seas League, having reached the Centenary year of our Royal Charter. A major upcoming highlight is the June Centenary Gala dinner and concert with world renowned Maltese opera star Joseph Calleja. Then, as part of the second year of our popular Public Affairs series, which this year has already seen speakers such as Lord Simon McDonald, former Permanent Undersecretary of the FCDO, US Ambassador Philip Reeker, and former Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, in September we host our Centenary ROSL Lecture with respected historian Andrew Roberts.

But importantly we are also celebrating, together with the whole nation and the Commonwealth, the Platinum Jubilee of HM The Queen, our Patron. Her Majesty’s service to the Commonwealth has been unparalleled and we celebrate it at ROSL with a Platinum Jubilee tea which includes our very own Queen Elizabeth II sponge cake, especially created by our Executive Chef Elliot Plimmer.

This year is also the year when finally, after two postponements due to the pandemic, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, known as ‘CHOGM’ will finally take place in June in Rwanda, attended by the Prince of Wales. Our Chairman, the Hon. Alexander Downer AC, suggests innovative ideas of how to enhance further the Commonwealth network, being quite the veteran of these biennial summits over the decades.

And of course, the other coming Commonwealth fixture this year is the Commonwealth Games hosted in the UK in Birmingham in July and we have a focus from the UK minister responsible for delivering the Games, Nigel Huddleston MP.

Finally, and not least this year we also celebrate 70 years of the ROSL Annual Music Competition. This year’s final in July will be a particularly special night, in the presence of our Vice Patron HRH Princess Alexandra, and back - after over a four-decade absence - at the prestigious Wigmore Hall in London. As this edition of *Overseas* lands on your doormats there will hopefully still be tickets left!

**Dr Annette Prandzioch**  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL



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“Since it was adopted at CHOGM in 2018, the Commonwealth Blue Charter has become the Commonwealth’s flagship ocean initiative, committing 54 countries to work together to address some of the world’s most pressing ocean issues”

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## From the EDITOR

Why is it that culture calls so in the summer? The long-awaited return of the sun should make the dark confines of the theatre, or the cramped intimacy of a tiny gallery unappealing. But the draw is undeniable. Maybe it’s the anticipatory buzz of a new exhibition, the stroll to a city gallery in the twilight, or the hit of inspiration that inspires lively post-event conversations in the pub garden afterwards.

Either way, in a summer of celebration (as Annette tells us, p.3), we invite you to toast the very best of UK culture in The arts report (p.32), with the ROSL ARTS team rounding up their highlights of what’s set to be a bumper summer of creativity, as small venues throw open their doors for the summer season after two years of restrictions.

In worldwide news, we mark the Commonwealth 2022 games in Birmingham by speaking to Geoff Thompson MBE (p.6) about his hopes for a lasting legacy for the Midlands and Dr Raf Nicholson shines a spotlight on women’s cricket (p.8), which will make its historic debut at the Games this year. Rwandan Government spokesperson Yolande Makolo and ROSL Chairman

Alexander Downer tell us their hopes for July’s CHOGM (p.24), plus Dr Jeff Ardron explains how the Blue Charter will take the Commonwealth nearer to our shared environmental goals (p.22). And in celebration of HM The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee, Abi Millar shares a retrospective of the ‘Million Mile Queen’s Commonwealth tours (p.16).

Closer to home at ROSL, the jewel in the crown of our summer events will be the AMC Gold Medal Final at Wigmore Hall (p.35) along with an inspired interpretation of classic French Fables in Les Animaux modèles (p.30), and our two-week Edinburgh residency (p.27).

The ROSL garden is already open for members to enjoy the fruits of gardener Simon Milner’s summer planting, as well as our new bar and grill (p.14), where we hope Executive Chef Elliot Plimmer’s delicious creations will whet your appetite for the reopening of our 1910 Dining Room in September (p.12).

We hope you join us in celebrating a truly memorable summer.

**Rosie Allen**  
editor@rosl.org.uk



BIRMINGHAM 2022

# A Games for everyone

With Birmingham's 2022 Commonwealth Games rapidly approaching, Deputy Chair Geoff Thompson MBE explains why sport is a force for positive social change, and how the Games and associated Birmingham Festival will promote a lasting legacy of hope and opportunity for the Midlands

As a child of the Windrush generation who has had an incredible journey through sport, taking me from the streets to stadiums and, occasionally, the rostrum throughout the world, I have been able to witness the power of sport; to unify nations, to promote the equality of purpose and, if only for a moment, the inclusivity of cultures, backgrounds, beliefs and identities.

As Deputy Chair of Birmingham 2022, and a native of the West Midlands, the Games have come at an important time in the social, cultural, economic and even political times that we all witness and experience as citizens of the Commonwealth and the world.

## FAIR GAME – THE LASTING LEGACY OF BIRMINGHAM 2022

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games will bring together 4,500 athletes from 72 nations and territories and more than one million spectators who will fill the stadiums to show their support. Furthermore, a global viewing audience of 1.5 billion is expected to watch the excitement unfold.

However, we have been clear from the start that the Games isn't just about the sporting action. It is also an opportunity for residents and businesses from across the region to come together – not only for the 12 days of the Games – but to create collaborations, partnerships and

relationships which will last long after the sports have come to an end, with hope and opportunity. Collectively, we will deliver a fantastic Commonwealth Games and celebrate sport and culture across the region, the nation and beyond.

From 28th July, the region will offer a warm welcome to athletes, spectators and visitors, fostering a feeling of unity and excitement. The 15 official venues for the Games will provide a fantastic platform for elite sport, and these facilities – plus the Birmingham 2022 Festival events – will all showcase the rich culture and heritage that the West Midlands region has in abundance.

The arrival of the Games is already acting as a catalyst for improved facilities, inclusive engagement programmes and providing inspiration and opportunities for people to improve their mental and physical health and wellbeing. In addition is the pledge to engage with more than one million children and young people, especially those from disadvantaged and disaffected communities, through our

Bring the Power Youth Programme. Alongside is Generation 22, our programme focused on widening knowledge, developing skills, improving access to sport and exercise, as well as helping to boost confidence and resilience in local communities. Through our community engagement, we are enabling local people to participate in the Games in a way that builds cohesion, inclusion, and pride, supported by the United by B2022 community programme and Birmingham City Council's £6 million community fund. All of this provides a youth, community and legacy opportunity for all that will see an exciting and unique Birmingham 2022 and stakeholder collaboration effort in the lead up to, during and post Games.

**The Games isn't just about the sporting action. It is also an opportunity for residents and businesses from across the region to come together**

## GROWTH AND SUCCESS FOR THE MIDLANDS

The Games are also providing opportunities for businesses – by Games time, businesses with an office in the region could have benefitted from around £300 million of contracts. Tens of thousands of jobs and



Through community engagement, Geoff hopes Birmingham 2022 will build a legacy of cohesion, inclusion and pride for local communities

volunteering opportunities have also been created for local people, both working directly for Birmingham 2022 and with our partners and suppliers. There are also the skills from a Games experience that are unique in the transformation of communities and society as a whole, as we aim to meet post-Covid challenges and opportunities.

The Birmingham 2022 Festival is the biggest celebration of creativity we've ever had in the region and one of the largest ever Commonwealth Games cultural programmes. It is a festival made in the West Midlands for the Commonwealth, and with over 200 events it offers a moment for everyone to come together and enjoy this brilliant showcase of creativity, that is as thoughtful as it is celebratory.

The Queen's Baton Relay, which has been travelling across the Commonwealth since

October 2021, will culminate with a 25-day tour of England in July, reflecting the stories of our baton bearers and Hometown Heroes. The international route has connected communities within the Commonwealth, sharing positive and inspirational stories of individual and

collective success through life resilience, dedication and service championing the pride of the modern Commonwealth.

As the countdown continues, the host city of Birmingham and the West Midlands region is ready and waiting to welcome the communities of the Commonwealth to this incredible celebration of sport and culture. The connection of diverse communities locally and globally will be seen on a world stage, with Birmingham at the heart of the action.

With the Commonwealth Heads of Government convened in Rwanda only a month before the opening ceremony, the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games will be the culmination of the bringing together of the hearts, minds and spirit of the Commonwealth movement to share the common and unique experiences that unite us.



## GEOFF THOMPSON MBE

As well as serving as the Deputy Chairman of Birmingham 2022, Geoff Thompson MBE is founder of Youth Charter, a UK-based international charity promoting sports, culture and arts around the world. Geoff has helped deliver many major sporting events, including the London 2012 Olympics and is also a former five times world karate champion.



# CHANGING THE GAME

Dr Raf Nicholson investigates why the arrival of women's cricket at the Commonwealth Games 2022 could level the playing field for sportswomen across the globe



Getty/ECB

On 19 February 1958, in Melbourne, 13 women gathered in Victoria Cricket Association House for the inaugural meeting of the International Women's Cricket Council (IWCC). With delegates present from England, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, Vera Cox, President of the English Women's Cricket Association, proclaimed that the moment was 'an opportunity for aiding the ideals of international peace and happiness...

I have a vision of Tours and Test Matches in all Continents in the not too distant future resulting in mutual understanding and lasting friendship.' As Cox suggested, cricket – including women's cricket – has historically been a key aspect of Commonwealth unity.

That unity will be formally recognised in July when, for the first time ever, women's cricket will feature in the Commonwealth Games. The 20-over tournament, which gets underway on 29 July in Birmingham, England, is the culmination

of years of campaigning – the IWCC first applied for inclusion in the Games in 1995 – and it represents an exciting opportunity to reach a new audience for the sport across the world. Players from Australia, Barbados, England, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa and Sri Lanka are currently eagerly preparing for the event. While many already have World Cup-winners' medals, the chance to take home gold at a global, multi-sport event like the Commonwealth Games is a special and unique opportunity.

## A WHISTLE-STOP HISTORY OF WOMEN'S CRICKET

Women's cricket is not a new sport – the first recorded match took place in 1745, while England and Australia contested the first ever international fixture at Brisbane in December 1934. By the 1990s, most of the major Commonwealth countries had teams and were represented at IWCC meetings. But until the ICC took over running of the sport from the IWCC in

2005, it was a sport run on a shoestring, with international tours few and far between, and all the players juggling cricket alongside full-time work or studies. Investment from the ICC, and the imperative for all national men's cricket boards to take over responsibility for developing women's cricket, has transformed the sport.

The day women's cricket really changed forever was on

6 May 2014, when the ECB announced the introduction of the first ever professional contracts for the women's game, anywhere in the world. Since then, all of the other top-ranked nations have followed suit, creating a cadre of athletes who are able to train full-time and therefore push the standards of play ever higher. And because the players are now full-time, they are able

to play more. The ICC's International Championship, introduced in 2014, guarantees that each of the top eight nations will play each other in bilateral series in each four-year World Cup cycle, meaning regular, competitive fixtures for these countries for the first time. With all this cricket in the calendar, the chance to compete at the Commonwealth Games is the icing on the cake.

Men's cricket has featured in the Games on only one previous occasion: a 50-over competition was staged as part of the 1998 Games in Kuala Lumpur, and won by South Africa. But, despite pleas from the IWCC, the women's game was overlooked on that occasion. The IWCC would go on to lobby for inclusion at the 2002 Manchester Games and 2006 Melbourne Games, but their attempts repeatedly met with failure. Only in August 2019, after the England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and the International Cricket Council (ICC) submitted a joint bid for women's cricket to be featured at the 2022 Games, did the Commonwealth Games Federation alter their stance. The fact that the positions of men's and women's cricket at the 1998 Games are now reversed – it is the female players who will get the chance to compete, with the men looking on in envy – is a huge coup for women's cricket. It speaks to the recent focus on gender parity by the Federation, who are proud that Birmingham 2022 will be the first time in history that a major multi-sport event will feature more women's than men's medal events.

Clare Connor, the ECB's Managing Director of Women's Cricket, was instrumental in steering the bidding process, and has described women's cricket's inclusion in the Games as 'an absolute game-changer'. 'People really tune into Olympic and Commonwealth Games, watching sports they normally wouldn't watch and are inspired by them,' she said in 2018, the year that the bid was submitted. 'It would be a different audience from a typical cricket tournament.

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So the benefits for women's cricket are very obvious.' Within the host country, England, the fact that the matches will all be shown live on the BBC makes it a particularly huge moment. Since 2005, almost all international cricket has been hidden behind a paywall on Sky Sports, excluding casual viewers. There are concerns that the move has led to a gradual decline in public interest in cricket, which was once England's national sport.

With a raft of viewers tuning in who would never usually watch cricket, the opportunity to view an entire cricket tournament on free-to-air television therefore feels like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to grow the game, both in England and across the world.

It makes sense that the chosen format for women's cricket's debut at the Commonwealth Games is Twenty20. The structure of the tournament will provide multiple opportunities for viewers across the world to tune in.

This shorter format, introduced in England in 2003, has been a revelation for the women's game, as a way of growing its fanbase and commercial appeal. Initially 'double-header' matches with the men, whereby women's matches were staged directly before men's ones, encouraged spectators to turn up earlier and gain a first taste of women's cricket; now women's cricket has its own,

dedicated following, as evidenced by those 86,000 people who flooded into the MCG on 8 March 2020 for the standalone World Cup final. T20 franchise leagues like the Women's Big Bash League in Australia, first staged in 2015/16, have offered opportunities for the world's best players to ply their wares around the globe, and have also attracted huge crowds.

Of course, growth has not been even across all cricket-playing countries. Australia and England (who recently contested the 2022 World Cup final in New Zealand) lead the pack, with semi-professional domestic set-ups in place underneath their national teams. Pakistan and Sri Lanka have only had international teams since 1996, and have struggled to be competitive on the international stage; Sri Lanka in particular have suffered during the Covid-19 pandemic, having played no bilateral cricket at all since the start of 2020. But recent announcements of new T20 franchise leagues for women in Pakistan and the Caribbean show that the national boards know that women's cricket is the future. The Commonwealth Games is a timely opportunity for the participating teams to demonstrate that to the world, on a truly global stage.

Australia are heavy favourites to take away the most coveted prize of all, a Commonwealth Games gold medal, having smashed all-comers in the recent 50-over World Cup. In truth, though, the event is an opportunity for women's cricket as a whole to win gold. Bring on 29<sup>th</sup> July!

**Dr Raf Nicholson is Senior Lecturer in the Business School at Bournemouth University. Her PhD examined the history of women's cricket in Britain since 1945 and she is a freelance cricket journalist, writing for many well-known publications. Raf is also editor of CRICKETher.com, a site dedicated to women in the game.**



# BRING ON THE GAMES

Proud Midlander Nigel Huddleston MP, Minister for Sport, Tourism and the Commonwealth Games, explains why Birmingham 2022 is a historic moment of togetherness, pride and celebration for us all



The countdown to the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games is on. With major competition venues now complete and over a million tickets sold, the stage is set and we are ready to welcome our Commonwealth friends to the UK.

As a proud Midlander, I know what makes Birmingham so special, from our areas of outstanding natural beauty, to its world-class venues and thriving cultural scene. The Games is the perfect opportunity to showcase the very best of Birmingham and the West Midlands to the whole Commonwealth.

We have committed £778 million of public funding for Birmingham 2022, representing the biggest investment in a sporting event in the UK since the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. That's because we believe passionately in the transformative potential of major sporting events for our towns and cities. We saw it with Manchester in 2002, London in 2012, and we'll see it again with Birmingham in 2022.

We are rallying behind the region with an additional £21.3 million investment to support Birmingham 2022's Business and Tourism Programme. The first of its kind, this major international programme is promoting the vast cultural and economic opportunities available in the region and demonstrating why it is a great place to live, visit, work and invest.

The Games will be a perfect moment to bring the Commonwealth family together once more and to celebrate our deep bonds of friendship. Since October, the Queen's Baton Relay – the symbolic staple of every Games – has been touring through 72 nations and territories, bringing communities back together and reflecting the West Midlands' rich Commonwealth heritage back to the world. Launched from Buckingham Palace by Her Majesty The Queen, the relay has demonstrated the spirit of friendship that our countries share.

Those threads have been woven into the rich fabric of Birmingham 2022 – a Games which are set to break records before a medal is even won. They will be the fastest – delivered in four and a half years rather than the usual seven – and the most sustainable Commonwealth Games ever. They will also be the most inclusive, delivering the biggest ever paralympic sport programme and featuring more women's medals than men's for the first time ever.

So whether visiting from overseas, joining the estimated 1.5 billion people tuning in to watch from home, or following the Queen's Baton Relay as it journeys back to the UK for Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, this is a historic moment of togetherness, pride and celebration for us all.

Bring on the Games!

## The best of the summer wine

Director of Food and Beverage Serge Pradier gives us a taste of the carefully-curated wine list at ROSL this summer, and shares his personal highlights

When the mercury rises, is there anything more tempting than a glass of something delicious enjoyed in the garden of Overseas House? My favourites include a crisp sauvignon-semillon blend from the Cape, a strawberry-scented Provencal rosé and two French classics that have the bright fruit and freshness to suit the warmer months.

### Seasalter, Groote Post South Africa, 2021

From the ocean-facing Darling Hills on the west coast of South Africa, this delicious white wine is fragrant with citrus notes and very subtle oak nuances. A blend of 90% sauvignon blanc with a splash of semillon, the fruit is picked in the cool mornings to retain freshness alongside hints of a salty ocean breeze. Groote Post – a working farm managed by Nick Pentz and family – have their own wildlife reserve, showing their commitment to sustainability.



### Eté en Provence Rosé South of France, 2021

A fresh and delicate Provence rosé which shines with the pale rose colour and hint of peach so reminiscent of the Mediterranean region. Grapes are grown on higher slopes, avoiding summer heat and benefitting from the Mistral wind, and are picked during the night to maximise the freshness and aroma of pomelo, green apples and red fruits. Expect refreshing minerality, strawberries, redcurrant and grapefruit from this super, flavour-packed rosé.



### Morgon Château la Durette Beaujolais, France, 2020

A perfect red for summer quaffing, this Morgon is equally delicious with or without food – I'd suggest you drink it chilled. Sourced from a small, one and a half hectare plot of old vines, the grapes are



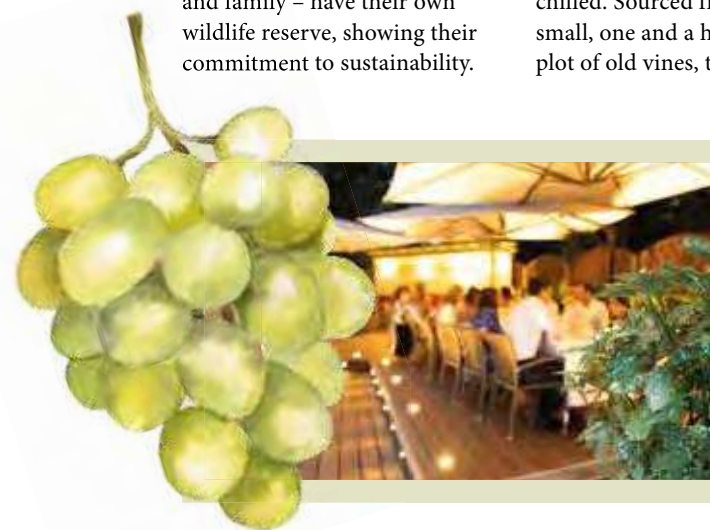
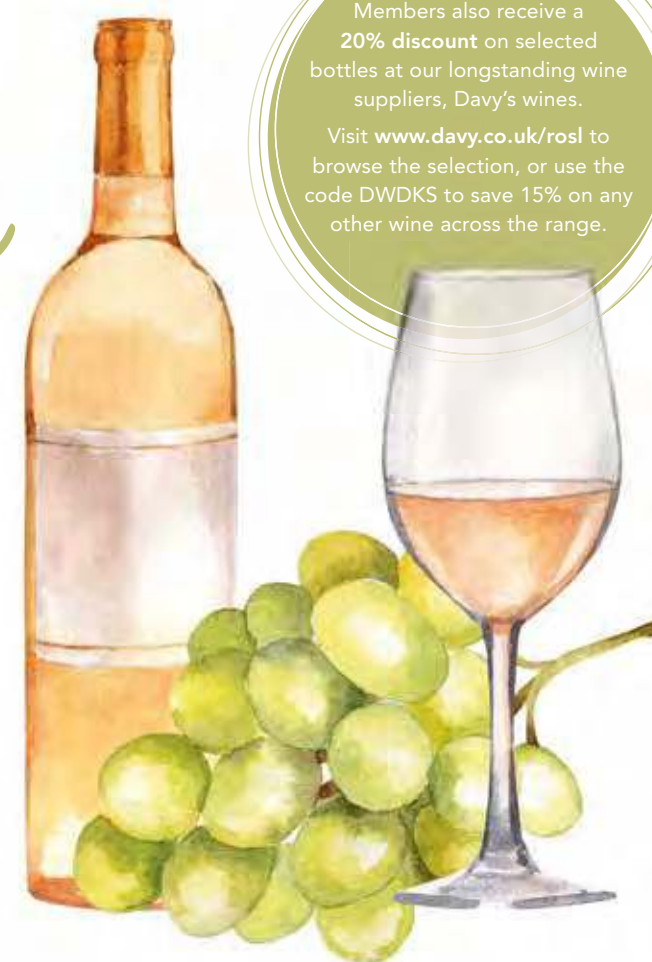
hand-harvested and cold-macerated for six days to bring out the freshness and enhance the fruit flavours. The resulting wine is brimming with red fruits with bright, racy acidity and a delicate mineral edge.

**Mâcon Village  
Domaine Chere  
Burgundy France, 2020**  
A rich and flavoursome Burgundy from a prestigious Domaine



Members also receive a **20% discount** on selected bottles at our longstanding wine suppliers, Davy's wines.

Visit [www.davy.co.uk/rosl](http://www.davy.co.uk/rosl) to browse the selection, or use the code DWDKS to save 15% on any other wine across the range.



### WINE CLUB AND DINNERS

Our fine wine dinners and tastings have proven a hit with members this year, previous events include a Truffle Dinner, featuring a tasting menu showcasing this rare and earthy delight with wines to match; Wines of Israel and a Fine Food, Fine Art and Fine Wines tasting, pairing a gastronomic experience with an exhibition of work from 40 extraordinary young Rising Star Artists. Two brand new 'Swiss Caves' wine cabinets will store all of our wines at the perfect temperature for enjoying straight away and, for dinners, will be paired with specially-matched dishes from Executive Chef, Elliott Plimmer.



Introducing...

# THE 1910 DINING ROOM

To mark the upcoming reopening of our Dining Room in September, we spoke to Executive Chef Elliot Plimmer and Director of Food and Beverage Serge Pradier to discover how we'll be offering something truly special for ROSL members to enjoy later this year

‘What’s missing from dining in London is theatre’ says Elliot Plimmer, ROSL’s Executive Chef who, along with Director of Food and Beverage, Serge Pradier, has been the expert eye overseeing the menus and wine list for the much-anticipated reopening of our Dining Room. ‘That’s what I want to bring back for ROSL members’.

Having cut his teeth in the kitchens of The Savoy, Elliot promises to bring back the excitement of London’s pre-covid fine dining scene to Park Place, with a new menu that showcases seasonal ingredients in a beautiful setting; ‘a proper brasserie’ he explains, ‘with all the elegance of the art deco age’. The dining room itself certainly looks the part, with its deep teal velvet chairs, statement chandelier, grey ombre paint detailing and vintage-

inspired artwork. But it’s the food itself that will be the real showstopper Elliot says: ‘It’s really important to me to bring back the table-side experience – we’re planning Dover sole, deboned and filleted for members at the table; chateaubriand of beef, dessert flambé maybe – beautiful ingredients presented with flair and something special for our members to enjoy’. Of course, the dishes are only as impressive as their ingredients, and Elliot’s focus on seasonality and commitment to using only the best ingredients are the basis of his new menus. ‘I’m using excellent local butchers, fishmongers and even a smokery in Hackney producing the best smoked salmon I’ve ever tried. We’ll also have an in-house pastry chef creating beautiful pastries for Afternoon Tea, and desserts for our lunch and dinner services.’



*‘Members have really been at the heart of these renovations’*

Warren Miller,  
General Manager

‘As you may know, ROSL recently brought our catering back in-house to allow for greater quality control, with investments being made not only the dining room but in an extensive kitchen renovation, which is already looking very smart with brand new installations and equipment. Members told us that good food, wine and service is a key reason for membership and so we recognised a need to invest in getting it right. Members really have been at the heart of the re-design, from the layout of seating to the new provisions for our breakfast service.’

The aim is to create an experience where our arts programme and food and drinks offering work in harmony, in which they can enjoy our bar, attend one of our arts events or talks and then join us in the dining room for dinner afterwards.’

## ARTISTIC LICENCE

Interior Designer Afra Affara explains the inspiration behind the Dining Room’s striking artwork.

‘They’re by the renowned French fashion illustrator, George Barbier. He was famous in the early 20th century and was in great demand by the large fashion houses of the day. He brought a sophisticated and elegant style to his illustrations, which I thought would be perfect for the Dining Room at Over-Seas House’.



The 1910 Dining Room will focus on beautiful ingredients presented with flair



*‘1910 is a homage to the story of where the Royal Over-Seas League began’*

Kate MacIntosh,  
Head of Brand and Creative

‘When it came to naming the Dining Room, we wanted to pay homage to the very beginnings of the Royal Over-Seas League at Over-Seas House, so the name 1910 – the year it all began – felt natural. It ties in beautifully to the look and feel of the Dining Room, with its art deco splendour. Characteristics of the art deco style originated in France in the mid-to-late 1910s, before developing into a major style in western Europe and the United States during the 1920s and 1930s, so we felt that this glamorous style would reflect the early days of our tenure at Over-Seas House.’

You’ll be able to enjoy your first taste of what’s to come with our breakfast service, which will be re-opening to members this summer, with a hot and cold buffet available for overnight guests, along with our new Afternoon Teas. You’ll also be able to enjoy Elliot’s delicious alfresco menu this summer, with our new garden bar and grill, which will be serving a selection of barbecue dishes alongside stone baked pizzas from our pizza oven, classic mains and salads (see page 14 for more on what to enjoy in the garden this summer).

To complement the new menus, Serge Pradier, Director of Food and Beverage, has been curating a wine list to celebrate the international connections and clientele of ROSL.

‘I’ve created a wine list that brings together two worlds; wines from the ‘old world’ (Italy, France, Spain etc) with a selection from Commonwealth countries, such as Australia and New Zealand to give members a good range of choice that feels in keeping with the Royal Over-Seas League’s ethos of championing friendship and collaboration

across the commonwealth and beyond. There’ll be something for everyone to enjoy.’

For Serge it’s important that an excellent food and wine menu is backed up by top-notch service too – ‘Gerard and his team bring the passion and experience you’ve come to expect from us here at Over-Seas House, providing seamless service and hospitality.’ He adds ‘I’d really recommend that you book a table, as they’re likely to be filled quickly.’

A series of wine events and dinners will take place in the Dining Room over the summer, with the garden bar and grill and the Brabourne room functioning as our main dining spaces until the Dining Room reopening in September.

We hope you join us as we look forward to a new era of fine dining at ROSL.

*The 1910 Dining Room opens its doors for breakfast for overnight guests this summer, with the full restaurant open for lunches and dinners from September. The 1910 Dining Room is also available to hire for private functions and events. Please email [hello@sixparkplace.co.uk](mailto:hello@sixparkplace.co.uk) for more information.*



# CELEBRATE THE SUMMER

A proper summer has been a long time coming – so with balmy weather and languorous evenings beckoning, what better time to enjoy our garden?

With Covid restrictions fully lifted and summer in full throttle, we're looking forward to welcoming members back to enjoy the atmosphere of our garden, where you can take in the beautiful planting and the lively hum of adjacent Green Park while enjoying a drink or dinner. A new addition to the garden this year is our new 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, stonebaked pizzas, vibrant salads and desserts, and our new terrace makes the perfect sheltered spot to sip a G&T and while away the twilight hours.

There's a programme of events for you to take in too. On the 6th June, cycling Shakespearean theatre troupe The HandleBards will be performing an energetic rendition of Shakespeare's classic cross-dressing romantic comedy Twelfth Night, and the return of our jazz evenings will see groups, singers and soloists provide entertainment for a delightful evening outdoors.

Buy tickets and find out more about our summer events at [www.rosl.org.uk/events](http://www.rosl.org.uk/events)

## Summer planting

ROSL Gardener Simon Milner tells us about the blooms that will be gracing the raised beds and borders of the ROSL garden this season.

'As I write this in March, it will soon be the time to look forward to summer, and next month is an ideal time for introducing new plants as the soil warms up from winter. The aim for the ROSL garden this year is to improve the garden's structure and to extend the flowering display later into autumn. When choosing new planting, every gardener has certain favourites they instinctively tend to call upon – these are the reliable 'good doers' which experience tells you are good at providing structure and a long season of interest.

One of my 'go to' groups of plants for London gardens are Salvias (also known as the sages). In recent years there has been a

great deal of horticultural interest in growing some of the more tender varieties. As climate change has made London's gardens far less frost-prone, many types of salvia that once needed to be protected in a greenhouse over winter are now surviving in the ground. Their great virtue of flowering late into autumn,

sometimes into and through winter, makes them particularly valuable for extending the season of interest. This year I hope to make use of a range of these semi-tender salvias in the sunnier parts of the garden. Home-grown from cuttings, they will provide a real display in the second half of the year.

Another group of plants that have rightfully attracted much attention are the hydrangeas, particularly forms of *Hydrangea paniculata*, with its long panicles, or cones, of small flowers. They do well in shadier positions and have long seasons of interest. *Hydrangea quercifolia*, the oak-leaved hydrangea has good autumn leaf colour. So hopefully by summer we will have introduced a few more hydrangeas to the main shrub bed.

All one can now hope for is a good growing summer, warmth and sunshine with adequate rain. In these days of climate change and more extreme weather getting a good summer is far from certain!



## ALFRESCO DINING

Our new garden menu features a tempting selection of vibrant flavours and seasonal ingredients; think tomato gazpacho with white crab, an elevated Caesar salad and melt-in-the-mouth roasted aubergine. Or indulge in a Neopolitan classic with a choice of pizzas, freshly baked in our new purpose-built oven.



Travels with the

# 'MILLION MILE QUEEN'

Elizabeth's Commonwealth tours

The Queen is not only the longest-serving monarch in history – she is also one of the best travelled. Abi Millar looks back at some of the most memorable royal tours undertaken in Elizabeth's seven decades in service

Over the course of her 70 years on the throne, the Queen has travelled more extensively than any other British royal in history. Kicking off her reign with a six-month Commonwealth tour – an epic voyage spanning 13 countries and 44,000 miles – the monarch has since visited all the Commonwealth countries, with the exception of Rwanda and Cameroon.

According to an estimate by *The Telegraph*, she has covered more than a million miles during her reign, equivalent to 42 trips around the circumference of the globe. And while her touring has come to a halt in recent years (her last trip abroad was in 2015), her jet-setting credentials would be hard to beat.

As Head of the Commonwealth, the Queen has always worked hard to engage with the countries under its banner. 'The Commonwealth bears no resemblance to the empires of the past', she said during her Christmas broadcast in 1953. 'It is an entirely new conception built on the highest qualities of the spirit of man: friendship, loyalty, and the desire for freedom and peace. To that new conception of an equal partnership of nations and races I shall give myself heart and soul every day of my life.'

At the time of this broadcast, the Queen was in New Zealand, then one of just eight countries to have joined the Commonwealth. Over the years ahead, as the British Empire dwindled, Commonwealth membership grew dramatically, adding a note of prescience to the Queen's address. Today, the Commonwealth comprises 54 countries, 15 of which count Elizabeth II as their head of state.

Below, we run through some of the Queen's most notable visits to Commonwealth nations.

## 1952

### 📍 KENYA

The twenty-something Princess Elizabeth was at a safari lodge in Kenya when she received word her father had died. Together with Prince Philip, she cancelled a planned riding and fishing trip and flew straight back to London, where she was greeted as Queen.

This would be the first of four royal trips to Kenya, which joined the Commonwealth in 1963. The Queen paid brief visits in 1972 and 1991, and in 1983 she undertook a five-day State Visit as the guest of President Arap Moi. This stay carried a note of poignancy, as the Queen revisited the very safari lodge where she'd learned about her ascension to the throne.

## 1953-1954

### 📍 AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND THE WEST INDIES

Between November 1953 and May 1954, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh left their young children behind and embarked on the most ambitious royal tour ever seen. They jetted off to the West Indies (Bermuda and Jamaica) before boarding a ship called SS Gothic and setting sail across the Panama Canal and the Pacific.

Following brief stops in Fiji and Tonga, SS Gothic docked in New Zealand two days before Christmas. The young royals spent more than a month here, before sailing into

**During their 58 days in Australia, the royals visited 57 towns and cities, made 35 flights and travelled 13,000 miles**

Sydney Harbour for a tour of Australia. Over a million excited onlookers lined the streets of Sydney to meet them.

During their 58 days in Australia, the royals visited 57 towns and cities, made 35 flights and travelled 13,000 miles. This exhausting itinerary – which included the opening of parliament, a children's pantomime, and a life-saving demonstration

on Bondi Beach – was nonetheless hugely affirming for the Queen. At the time, the monarchy was at the height of its popularity, with one Australian telling *The Telegraph*: 'we have gone Queen crazy'.

On 1<sup>st</sup> April, the royal party set sail towards the Cocos Islands, followed by Ceylon, Yemen, Uganda and Malta. Here they were reunited with Prince Charles and Princess Anne, before continuing forth to Gibraltar and finally home to London.

Following her inaugural tour, the Queen visited Australia another 15 times, making this the foreign country in which she has spent the most time.

## 1961

### 📍 INDIA

In January 1961, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh paid their first State Visit to India. The tour – which included an elephant procession, tiger hunt and numerous banquets – was intended to mark a new chapter in Anglo-Indian relations. It was the first time a British monarch had visited India since the end of imperial rule.

The duo visited India again in 1983 and 1997, with the latter visit commemorating 50 years of independence.

## 1977

### 📍 SILVER JUBILEE COMMONWEALTH TOUR

The Queen's most extensive tour came in 1977, to celebrate 25 years on the throne. Together with the Duke of Edinburgh, she visited 14 Commonwealth countries and covered over 56,000 miles.

In February and March, she enjoyed a six-week trip to the Pacific, including stints in Australia, New Zealand, Samoa, Fiji and Papua New Guinea. Later in the year, she ventured across the Atlantic, to Canada, the Bahamas, British Virgin Islands, Antigua and Barbuda, and Barbados. She is said to have wanted to mark the occasion by meeting as many people as possible.



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## 1995

## SOUTH AFRICA

The Queen visited South Africa in 1995, following the end of apartheid. During her week-long stay, she met the newly elected President Nelson Mandela and visited townships across the country, counter to security recommendations.

Although South Africa was one of the first countries to join the Commonwealth, it left in 1961, and didn't rejoin until 1994. For many South African politicians, the tour held significance as a gesture of acceptance by the international community.

## 2002

GOLDEN JUBILEE  
COMMONWEALTH TOUR

The Queen's Golden Jubilee, which marked 50 years on the throne, was a muted event in some respects, following the deaths of the Queen's mother and sister. Determined to make the best of the situation, the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh kept their royal obligations and visited Jamaica, New Zealand, Australia and Canada.

Just days after losing Princess Margaret, the royal couple arrived in Jamaica, for a visit timed to coincide with the country's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence. Next they toured New Zealand, before arriving in Australia for the 17<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. Although they encountered some anti-monarchical sentiment during their stay, the tour was important symbolically.

Later that year, the duo capped the celebrations with a 12-day tour of Canada. Canada is the Queen's most-visited country, with an astonishing 27 trips to her credit. Together with

Clockwise, from left: Commonwealth Heads of Government, London, 1977; with Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser, Melbourne, Australia, 1981; with Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief Emeka Anyaoku, Zimbabwe, 1991; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1989

the Duke of Edinburgh, she stayed there for the final time in the summer of 2010.

## 2015

## MALTA

The royal couple's final visit to a Commonwealth country came in November 2015, with a three-day tour of Malta. While the Queen was officially there to open the 24<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, the trip had a personal resonance too.

The couple had lived in Malta for two years as newlyweds, enjoying a relatively quiet existence there before Elizabeth came to the throne. They were to return six times, notably for their diamond wedding anniversary in 2007, and the Queen always reinforced how special the place was to her. It was a pertinent, if bittersweet, place to spend their final trip abroad.



Commonwealth Secretariat

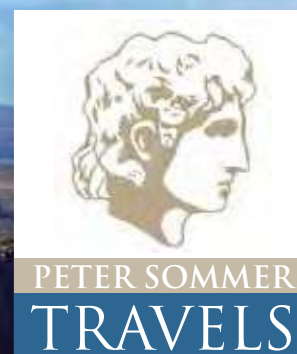
## PASSING THE BATON

At 96 years old, and sadly widowed, the Queen will not be embarking on any tours to celebrate her Platinum Jubilee. However, members of the royal family have been undertaking spring tours in her place.

Between 19 and 26 March, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge visited Belize, Jamaica and the Bahamas, coinciding with a trip to Ireland by the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall. Princess Anne is due to visit Papua New Guinea, and then Australia, while Prince Edward will be touring several Caribbean islands – Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines. None of these visits will match earlier royal tours, in terms of scale or grandiosity. However, they will seek to provide tribute to the Queen's tireless service – 70 years, and a million miles, on the throne.



Commonwealth Secretariat

PETER SOMMER  
TRAVELS

"Peter Sommer Travels continue to excel. The tour was a fantastic couple of weeks of history, archaeology and mythology combined with beautiful scenery, wonderful food and fantastic wine."

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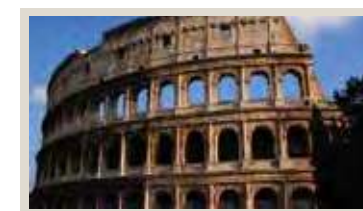
- NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC



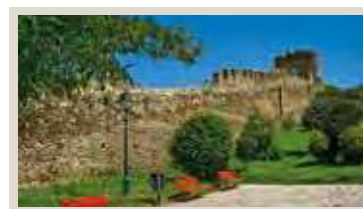
EXPLORING HADRIAN'S WALL



CRUISING TO EPHEBUS



EXPLORING ROME



EXPLORING MACEDONIA



EXPLORING THE PELOPONNESE



EXPLORING IRELAND

WALKING & CRUISING  
THE LYCIAN SHOREA GASTRONOMIC GULET CRUISE  
IN TURKEYEXPLORING CRETE: ARCHAEOLOGY,  
NATURE AND FOOD



# THE CULINARY SPIRIT OF CRETE

Cretan-born Irini Tzortzoglou, the charismatic BBC MasterChef UK 2019 champion, may have swapped life on the sun-soaked Greek Island for the lush hills of the Lake District, but she's still passionate about championing the unique cuisine of her homeland. We asked her about her food philosophy, the unique gastronomic heritage of Crete and Greece, and the exciting menu she's created for ROSL members to enjoy this summer

## IRINI TZORTZOGLOU

Born in the small village of Ano Akria, Crete, Irini's first food memories include 'an abundance of fresh, home-cooked food in a loving home full of people'. After a move to London in 1980 and subsequent 30-year career in banking, Irini entered and won BBC's Masterchef UK 2018/19. She's since published a cookery book, 'Under the Olive Tree' and is an olive oil sommelier.



*You've said before that there was a 'scarcity of luxuries' in your childhood, but that there was an abundance of fresh home cooked food – how has your cooking been influenced and enhanced by a need to make the most of the ingredients available to you?*

The more we hear about the danger to the planet, the more haunted I become by the prospect that future generations will pay for our desire to eat things flown thousands of miles to reach us. I often wonder what it would be like to eat only what grows locally and I must say, there is quite a bit of nostalgia involved in remembering the first ripe grape or the first taste of melon or pomegranate. I also love the slow and lengthy food processes my grandmothers and mother used in order to preserve foods. I don't think that you can forget deep-seated principles when it comes to something so basic, even if occasionally you get carried away by bad habits (formed from) an abundance of goods.

*How does cooking from Crete differ from Greek mainland cooking in your opinion?*

Any differences in the cuisine of different parts of Greece, which is a very fragmented country, has historically been caused by what was produced, grown or caught locally. So, in Northern Western Greece where the land is arid and mountainous we see many dishes based on meat or dairy, as we do in the Western part of Crete for the same reasons. Fish and seafoods feature heavily on the other hand in the diet of many small Aegean islands. Growing up on the island of Crete, a very fertile land where everything grows easily and in great abundance has made me very selective when it comes to the quality of ingredients so I try to buy local, fresh, farm produce wherever possible.

Former MasterChef champion Irini Tzortzoglou with ROSL Executive Chef Elliot Plimmer. Their collaboration includes dishes such as the mouth-watering Goan Curry.

*Is there one Greek ingredient that you wish was more widely known and why?*

Yes, I think that if transport was not an issue, I would love to see more Greek dairy in the UK market. We have delicious soft and hard cheeses which, being the product of both ewe and goat milk, is a little healthier and very flavourful indeed.

*You worked with our Executive Chef Elliot to create a special menu for ROSL members this spring and summer – how did you put the menu together and what feelings and experiences did you want to invoke with the menu?*

The menu served in March in celebration of the Commonwealth was designed to be exactly that; bringing together ingredients and flavours from different countries but which worked well in order for a harmonious menu. I found the process of digging deep into memories from my travels very exciting! The kitchen team were fantastic in executing my ideas and Chef Elliot's experience was instrumental in the exceptional delivery of the menu.

The June menu for 'An Evening With Irini' is more personal as it comprises dishes from my MasterChef journey and my book. I am particularly thrilled that diners will have an opportunity to learn about the Greek wines of today and sample them paired with the menu.

*What's your philosophy when it comes to everyday cooking – what kind of things inspire you and how does it differ from your more formal creations?*

I am lucky in that my husband is very easy going, so he is equally happy to eat a simple Greek omelette (the best in the world, I must say!) cheese and biscuits or something I am working on for the 10th time. As for myself, I tend to taste repeatedly to the point that I often go without a proper meal. I have a sweet tooth so many of my calories come from trying cakes and desserts sadly!

*Greek wine is gaining a great reputation too –how do you think it complements Greek cooking?*

I am so very proud of the Greek wine producers of today for the investment they make in their craft, reviving old grape varieties and competing on the world stage. I was thrilled to see Greek wines featured in menus in New Zealand and Australia during recent travels and they are often included in Michelin-starred restaurants in this country. For me as a chef, it is wonderful to have wine from indigenous grapes to use in dishes using ingredients grown on the same land. It is the way I love to cook and resonates totally with my food heritage.

**Enjoy An Evening with Irini at the clubhouse on Thursday 30 June. Tickets can be bought at [rosl.org.uk/events](https://rosl.org.uk/events). For more of Irini's delicious recipes, follow her on Instagram (Irini Tzortzoglou) or visit [www.irinicooks.com](https://www.irinicooks.com)**



# CHARTERING UNKNOWN WATERS

Dr Jeff Ardron returns to provide an update on the Blue Charter in the lead-up to June's CHOGM and the challenges we must overcome to save our oceans

Since it was adopted at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in April 2018, the Commonwealth Blue Charter has become the Commonwealth's flagship ocean initiative, committing 54 countries to work together to address some of the world's most pressing ocean issues.

Engagement from most countries has been strong; interest from partners has been high; and the Commonwealth Secretariat has worked hard to provide an array of training and capacity-building opportunities and solutions for member countries.

However, our sturdy flagship is still sailing

close to the wind with limited manoeuvrability. Here we outline the journey so far, emphasising that in unknown waters and in the face of uncharted hazards, adequate resourcing will be critical for the next leg of the journey.

## PROGRESS SO FAR

Of the Commonwealth's 54 countries, 46 (plus one overseas territory) have now joined one or more of the Blue Charter's ten Action Groups. These Action Groups are country-led and membership is voluntary; thus, they reflect coalitions of willing governments, ready to tackle the various ocean-related

challenges, ranging from climate change to marine protection to 'blue economies'.

Some have gathered multiple times and made concrete steps towards co-ordinated ocean action, despite constrained human and financial resources. For example, many countries have passed legislation tackling single-use plastic bags, straws and food containers. However, for others activity has been hampered by these constraints.

In response, over the past four years, the Commonwealth Secretariat's Blue Charter team has arranged the virtual training of more than 400 officials from 40 countries in ten topic areas and produced eight online

learning courses and 'toolkits' on various themes, such as mangrove restoration and 'blue carbon'. More than sixty case studies illustrating existing good and best practices in sustainable ocean management have been published. We have developed a curated database of more than 200 online training opportunities, and another database of more than 100 marine funding opportunities. (Yes, we've been busy!)

Like everywhere, the Covid pandemic impacted our work. Some of us fell seriously ill. Others have lost loved ones. Previously planned in-person training and events (including our 'All-Champions' meeting) were hastily redesigned for virtual participation. Governments with an emergency on their hands were understandably slower to respond, and progress decelerated, but it did not stop. On the contrary, our intrepid flagship sailed onward, albeit under unpredictable winds, and often with a shorthanded but dedicated crew.

In 2022, our focus so far has been on developing rapid assessments in co-operation with each of the ten Blue Charter Action Groups. These rapid assessments provide a cost-effective and focused approach to policy and project development, as we 'build back better' in a post-Covid, climate changing world. For example, in partnership with the Stimson Center, with support from the Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA) and the UK Government through its Blue Planet Fund, we are performing rapid ocean-climate risk assessments in three pilot countries: Barbados, Kiribati, and Sri Lanka. Lessons learned will be used to streamline the process for other countries, with more rapid assessments planned around blue economy transition, coastal fisheries, mangrove restoration and marine protected areas, amongst other Blue Charter themes.

## THE NECESSITY OF PROVISIONING

Still, it is clear we need to ramp up action. For Action Groups to really make a difference, they need more resources. As we sail towards the upcoming Commonwealth

Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) this year in landlocked Kigali, we know that we will need to gain the security of moving further offshore, giving ourselves room to move, to ride out storms, and to find more consistent winds. In other words, the Action Groups will need to secure new funding streams.

It is a critical time for the Blue Charter. We need to transition from training to pilot projects (day sailing) to full project development (oceanic crossings). Doing so, however, is a step-by-step process, tacking back and forth, steadily empowering governments through new partnerships and improved resourcing.

Nonetheless, we are hopeful that we will have some big announcements to make in June - following consideration by our countries' leaders. Stay tuned!

Funding has been a core concern for a couple of years now. The Action Groups need a kindly shift in winds to deliver their vessels into the future. In April 2021, we hosted an extraordinary meeting to discuss better resourcing the Blue Charter Action Groups. Experts on financing and organisational development made presentations and advised three possible routes: 1) business as usual; 2) increasing internal Secretariat financing; or 3) establishing a legally independent fund dedicated to external support for the Blue Charter.

The first route is not really an option. It turns out that Sustainable Development Goal 14, dedicated to the ocean, is currently the least financed of all the United Nation's SDGs by far. Our own research also found that less than 2% of climate finance (from the 'Green Climate Fund') went to projects that had any ocean-related elements at all. The expert review concluded that, while better use of established resources could indeed fill some funding holes, more options would be needed. The remaining two routes, however, are not mutually exclusive and could be undertaken together.

The second route is challenging but offers some solutions. Commonwealth country pledges to the Secretariat before and during

Covid have been in steady decline. However, we are thinking 'outside the box' to leverage what we have in new ways. In the autumn of 2021, our Board of Governors approved the establishment of an internal Blue Charter 'Designated Fund', which allows us to plan over multiple financial years and to attract modest funding from external partners.

Our first project under the Designated Fund will be the 'Blue Charter Project Incubator', to be launched at CHOGM. (You read it here first!) As its name suggests, it will assist governments under the Blue Charter in establishing new pilot projects. With a focus on very small projects, it is modest, but nonetheless addresses a critical gap in project pipelines, the first link in the anchor chain leading to larger ocean outcomes.

The third route, an independent external fund dedicated to supporting Commonwealth countries, has been researched and recommended to us by the experts. This option would allow us to grow our partnerships significantly, providing a conduit for third party support, supporting a pipeline of small to medium-sized projects.

We believe that for the Blue Charter flagship to travel greater distances, hard work with all hands on deck will remain essential, but will need to be coupled with access to increased resourcing - fairer winds - and that these are most likely to be found further offshore, away from our traditional sources of support.

Over the past three years we have been receiving questions and suggestions from countries, revising the ideas, and reporting back. Details have now been submitted to our member countries for consideration at this year's CHOGM.

## ON THE HORIZON

To conclude, we have made excellent progress, but in order to implement a pipeline of Blue

Charter projects, political goodwill and courage, such as seen in CHOGM 2018, will be required again at CHOGM 2022. Along the route to CHOGM, should you happen upon one of our crew, please do wish us 'fair winds and following seas'. In these stormy conditions, where the legs of landlubbers quake and their lips quiver, we appreciate the kindness and support of fellow seasoned sailors! But seriously, if you would like to learn more about the Blue Charter and our oceanic ambitions, please do not hesitate to contact one of us. Visit [bluecharter.thecommonwealth.org](http://bluecharter.thecommonwealth.org) for more information.





# DELIVERING A COMMON FUTURE

The Commonwealth Heads of Governments meeting presents an opportunity for Commonwealth leaders from 54 countries to discuss shared issues and challenges and work with other nations to pool resources and knowledge. Here, Rwandan Government spokesperson Yolande Makolo explores the opportunities for change that CHOGM 22 presents, while ROSL Chairman Alexander Downer AC highlights a need to move on from being seen as a legacy of history to remain a practical institution fit for a modern world

YOLANDE MAKOLO,  
SPOKESPERSON  
FOR RWANDAN  
GOVERNMENT



'In June, the leaders of the 54 Commonwealth nations will meet for the first time in four years. We are honoured to be hosting them in Kigali. As this occasion approaches, it is important to reflect on why this organisation is still relevant in today's world, and why CHOGMs are still important to advancing our shared interests and overcoming our common challenges.

First and foremost, Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2022 will be historic. By choosing Rwanda as the host of the meeting, the Commonwealth has decided for the very first time to convene in a nation with no ties to the British Empire.

Rwanda – which joined in 2009 – is one of the only two members of the Commonwealth with no such history, along with Mozambique, a former Portuguese colony.

The fact that these countries are not only welcomed warmly but are placed front and centre of the Commonwealth is momentous. In a modern world where colonialism is increasingly coming under the microscope for the exploitation and injustices which it perpetrated, the Commonwealth's evolution signals a recognition of the need to move beyond its imperial past, and towards an ambitious vision for the future.

It is this vision which will be the central focus of the upcoming summit, which will address the overarching theme of 'Delivering a Common Future'.

The Commonwealth – though it brings together an extraordinarily diverse group of nations, and the 2.6 billion people which make up their populations – derives its strength from the shared values and principles which unite all its members.

These values of respect, resilience, peace, equality, diversity, inclusivity and the pursuit of shared prosperity have brought together this family of nations for nearly a century, and we will continue to work to strengthen these bonds. But what are the ways in which these values can translate into actions for the future?

In the short-term, the issue that has prevented Commonwealth leaders from meeting for the past two years is one which must be addressed: Covid-19. While much of the world is taking increasingly certain steps towards normality, the pandemic has devastated the planet, costing millions of lives and causing huge damage to the global economy.

## A FORUM FOR CHANGE

Ahead of CHOGM, four specially created forums – Youth, Women, People and Business – will convene to ensure that their key concerns and issues are considered at the main leaders' meeting. Subjects for discussion will include gender equality, women's economic empowerment and redefining and rescoping sustainability across the Commonwealth.

## COVID AND CLIMATE: TWIN CRISES FACING THE COMMONWEALTH

As a matter of priority, the world must continue to support ongoing efforts to recover from the destruction wrought by the global pandemic and build resilience to manage the next health threat. It is easy for many in developed nations to forget that over 35% of the world has still not received even one dose of a Covid vaccination.

The pandemic has also highlighted glaring inequalities in global healthcare infrastructure, knowledge and know-how. We should also use the shared values and partnership of the Commonwealth to look for ways in which the organisation can help deliver real change at this level.

In Rwanda, we are looking forward to commencing vaccine manufacturing here thanks to our partnership with BioNTech. Another Commonwealth member, Ghana, is also part of this initiative. We are very much open to discussing further how best to increase global health security by investing in initiatives to increase access and equity in the global health sector.

Looking further into the future, there is one priority that rises above all others: the climate crisis. Our 54 nations span the full global spectrum when it comes to climate. It includes some of the world's largest industrial powers, and its most vulnerable nations, each with different approaches to climate policy. Yet we all share a resolute commitment to facing up to climate change,

and we must stand together on this front.

In Rwanda, we have made the environment a priority in the reconstruction of our country and have put it at the heart of our engagement with international partners. The Commonwealth has already demonstrated leadership in this area and can further push for more global effort to arrest the changes which are putting our planet at risk.

Urgent commitments have been made around the world, including at COP26 in Glasgow, last November, and at the UN Environment Assembly in Kenya last March, by Commonwealth members.

We must build on this momentum and continue action in both mitigating our environmental impact, and investing in adaptation and climate resilience, particularly in climate vulnerable nations like most of our Commonwealth members.

Acting together through a forum like the Commonwealth could produce remarkable results. The ability to obtain agreements in the Commonwealth is far easier than negotiating across behemoth institutions like the United Nations.

## THE MIGRATION CHALLENGE

Another crucial global issue is one for which the UK and Rwanda – the countries between which the chair-in-office baton will be passed in June – have made international headlines recently.

We are facing an unprecedented migration challenge at a global scale. There are two issues which are driving



this, both of which the Commonwealth can come together to help remedy. Firstly, forced migration, thanks to conflict and persecution. Secondly, economic migration, driven by crippling global inequalities of opportunity.

In terms of addressing economic migration, the Commonwealth could also provide a valuable forum for more bilateral and multilateral partnerships which focus on addressing the vast opportunity gaps which drive people away from their homes.

We are convinced that this type of empathetic focus on underlying causes, rather than superficial detention-and-deterrence programmes, is the way forward. The Commonwealth could lead this global effort and find mutually beneficial and empowering solutions to this question of migration.

## A DIGITAL FUTURE

Finally, in respect to securing a prosperous tomorrow for our Commonwealth family and indeed the wider world, we cannot neglect a valuable potential enabler of positive change: technology.

We should be under no illusions that our future is digital. The advent of the fourth industrial revolution has opened innumerable opportunities in what is becoming an increasingly borderless world. Covid-19 has brought this reality into sharp focus.

This Heads of Government Meeting will focus on how we can connect, innovate, and transform – using technology as a driving force. We must prioritise forward-thinking investment and governance reform as a keystone for a more connected future. Technology can bring the Commonwealth family even closer together.

There is no doubt that, as the organisation approaches its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2026, the Commonwealth still has considerable power to effect change, and can continue to adapt to meet the challenges we will face in the future.

As we look forward to CHOGM 2022 in Kigali and Rwanda's term as chair-in-office, we hope that our global family can take this opportunity to establish deeper commitments to partnerships which can change the world for the better.

ALEXANDER DOWNER,  
ROSL CHAIRMAN



'This will be a crucial meeting for the future survival of the Commonwealth. The challenge the host, President Paul Kagame, and the organisers will face is to make the meeting truly valuable to all its participants. It's one thing to say that the very fact that leaders of 53 countries will meet together is in and of itself a good thing, but it's another for them to have practical outcomes which enhance the welfare of their people.

It's the practical outcomes which will drive the Commonwealth for the next few years, not worthy slogans which signal virtue but do nothing more. We all agree on the importance of peace, sustainability and human dignity and equity, but what leaders will want from the Commonwealth are initiatives which help drive higher living standards, better health and a cleaner environment.

The Commonwealth could, for example, play a more active role in freeing up trade between its members.

A Commonwealth-wide free trade agreement is not a practical option given the instinctive protectionism of many of the members.

But having said that, a new branch of the Commonwealth Secretariat could be set up to promote trade facilitation and gradual liberalisation. Importantly, this body could also help to facilitate investment flows between Commonwealth countries.

Building on the work of the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council, the Secretariat body could be based in New Delhi rather than in London but still come under the auspices of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Not only would this give the Commonwealth a more practical and useful role in promoting the prosperity of its members, but it would be sensible to embrace India, which comprises around half the population of the Commonwealth, in the institution's architecture.

The Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting could also look at ways the Commonwealth could enhance the skills of civil servants in Commonwealth countries. There is no doubt that prosperity is a

function of governance. The more efficient and effective government is, the greater the chances of a country achieving rising living standards. Efficient governments do not just need visionary politicians, they need highly skilled civil servants.

The Commonwealth could set up, at relatively little cost, a sophisticated training programme for civil servants using the best of Commonwealth universities – and let's face it, the Commonwealth hosts some of the very best universities in the world.

Thirdly, the Commonwealth as an institution should be able to use the skills and expertise of people who live in Commonwealth countries. It could invite leading figures in areas such as finance, environmental management and diplomacy to provide advice and assistance to Commonwealth countries with particular needs. Indeed, the Commonwealth Secretariat could set up a network of special advisors who could be called on at short notice.

The point of these sort of ideas is to give the Commonwealth practical meaning for its members. Of course the Commonwealth is a useful network and does have convening power. This, however, will never be enough to attract heads of government to meetings every two years.

What is more, most of the members of the Commonwealth were originally part of the British Empire. The only exceptions are Rwanda and Mozambique. This is all very well but the Commonwealth has to move on from being seen as a legacy of history – a history which is understandably debated – to being a modern practical institution which delivers for its members.

So the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Rwanda will be important. It will be an opportunity for the Commonwealth to deliver exciting new programmes harnessing the energy of its member states and its vast population. That meeting will have to guard against long communiqués rich in motherhood statements but poor in practical initiatives. *The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting 2022 will take place during the week of 20 June 2022, in Kigali, Rwanda. For more information visit: [chogm2022.rw](http://chogm2022.rw)*

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# Bach for breakfast

When it comes to arts festivals, it doesn't get much more colourful or prestigious than the Edinburgh Fringe. Arts Coordinator Cerys Beesley tells us what to expect from the ROSL residence this year

We're thrilled that the ROSL Recitals series returns to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in person this year!

Returning to the Royal Scots Club, we will be holding two weeks of recitals, featuring the bestselling titles *Bach for Breakfast*, *Beethoven for Breakfast* and *Mozart at Teatime*.

Our critically acclaimed series brings together the finest young classical musicians, all ROSL prizewinners, for two weeks of exceptional music making. Start your day with Bach or Beethoven for breakfast, pause

for Chopin or Gershwin after lunch, and unwind to Mozart or Brahms at teatime. Over the two weeks, we will be holding thirty concerts (three daily from Monday-Friday). Expect to see some familiar faces alongside some newer ones in this year's lineup, as we forge new partnerships, and bring some brilliant repertoire to the Fringe.

With the borders now open, we are looking forward to hosting the Pettman/ROSL New Zealand Scholars and supporting them as they make their Edinburgh Festival Fringe debut, alongside new collaborations with our more established prize winners. ROSL 2021 Gold Medal Winner Ryan Corbett, will be joining us alongside other recent prize winners including George Todica, Marie Sato, Lewis Graham and the Mikeleiz-Zucchi Duo. Some favourites from years past including Ashley Fripp, Florian Mitrea

The ROSL Recitals series at the Fringe will include (clockwise from left): Lewis Graham, Marie Sato, Ashley Fripp and Florian Mitrea

and Viv McLean complete the lineup. We are always delighted that past prize winners are keen to return to perform with us – our family of creatives is very important and I love that we can continue to connect and support those who keep in touch throughout their careers.

So do join us at the Royal Scots Club (Venue 241) from 8th - 18th August to enjoy the atmosphere in what's known as one of the most civilised experiences at the Fringe! Every concert includes tea, coffee and biscuits in the ticket price, making it the perfect treat for you to relax after the hustle and bustle of the festival, and to experience the brilliant music-making on offer.

Visit [www.rosl.org.uk/events-to-buy-tickets](http://www.rosl.org.uk/events-to-buy-tickets)

fringe



# MY CITY EDINBURGH

The gothic charms and storied history of Scotland's capital makes it the perfect backdrop for a packed year-round cultural calendar. We asked Peter Thierfeldt, Head of Development at St Mary's Music School in Edinburgh, where we're currently providing a six-year student scholarship, to tell us what makes his Edinburgh such a captivating city



*Describe Edinburgh in three words*  
Historic, smart and vibrant.

*What are the cultural highlights that make Edinburgh a must-visit destination?*

For a city of its size, Edinburgh has an abundance of cultural highlights. Walking the full-length of the Royal Mile, with a few detours down the closes, steps and Victoria Street are a must. It's a feast of architecture with many independent shops and restaurants to enjoy.

As a concert-goer, the best nights to be in town are Thursday for the Scottish Chamber Orchestra season at the Queen's Hall and Friday for the Royal Scottish National Orchestra at the architecturally impressive Usher Hall.

The Festival Theatre presents Scottish Ballet, Scottish Opera, musicals and theatre, and it is a really handsome building, restored in the mid-1990s, making it one of the best places in Scotland for great stage craft.

*Do you have any tips for under-the-radar places of interest?*

St Cecilia's Hall just off the Cowgate in the Old Town is one of my favourite places in Edinburgh. It has Scotland's oldest public concert hall, beautifully restored and reopened in 2017, alongside a well-presented collection of musical instruments. There are few places in the world where one can take in an early music

concert and at the interval explore the collection, and peer into a conservation suite with historic instruments under repair. It's so inspiring. There's also the auction house Lyon & Turnbull on Broughton Place that has an endless presentation of the most exquisite art, objects and furniture.

When it comes to restaurants and bars, I seek out those with character. The VooDoo Rooms are pretty lush for a cocktail and nothing tops fish and chips in the grandeur of The Dome on George Street. If you really want to treat yourself to a memorable high tea, there is no better place than The Colonnades at the Signet Library, surrounded by both legal and literary history, where there is a manuscript copy of Walter Scott's *The Bride of Lammermuir* on display, in this elegant Enlightenment-period setting.

*How do you think the architecture and rich history of Edinburgh has shaped its cultural landscape?*

I am often reminded that the inspiration for *St Trinian's* was

a progressive girls' school that is now a baronial hall of residence for the University of Edinburgh. This, combined with the *Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, makes me think that an awful lot of mischievous

things have taken place in the grand buildings of Edinburgh, helping to give it an unexpected hinterland of interest.

*What's the best time of year to visit?*

Well of course it is August for the Festivals; who could resist the incredible creativity and performance brought right to our doorstep from all over the world?

## ROSL'S STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP

When a member generously left a legacy of £65,000 to fund refurbishments to the music room at our Edinburgh clubhouse, it unfortunately coincided with our decision to sell the building. However, we were thrilled that the donor's family approved the use of the money to go towards funding six years' worth of £5,000 scholarships for a student at St Mary's School of Music in Edinburgh and the same for the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow.



Clockwise: pupils from St Mary's Music School perform at St Cuthbert's parish church; the Royal Mile and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra at the stunning Usher Hall





## Les Animaux modèles

Visual Arts Coordinator Robin Footitt discusses the intricacies of what is sure to be the highlight of our summer programme, a collaborative art exhibition and concert performance with Annual Music Competition alumni, pianist and composer Joseph Havlat

The summer of 2021 was fraught with many uncertainties; shortly after the reopening of the Clubhouse in June it was clear that our annual Edinburgh Festival Fringe series of classical music concerts would not be going ahead as usual. As an alternative measure, Geoff Parkin, Artistic Director, conceived the ROSL Recitals, bringing the Fringe to London

– hosting three daily concerts over one week. It was shortly after performing *Chopin After Lunch* that 2019 Keyboard Section Final winner Joseph Havlat proposed an intriguing collaboration encompassing all aspects of the arts in a new retelling of Francis Poulenc's ballet *Les Animaux modèles*...

*Les Animaux modèles* (1940-42), was the third and final ballet composed by Francis

Poulenc (1899-1963) and was originally staged at the Paris Opéra, premiering on 8 August 1942. Sections of the ballet are based on stories from Jean de La Fontaine's *Fables* (1668-94), a classic of French literature with 239 fables over 12 volumes collected from a wide variety of Western and Eastern sources adapted into French free verse. The piece is in eight movements with the *middle six* being fables:

- Petit jour (Dawn)
- *Lours et les deux compagnons* (The bear and the two companions)
- *La cigale et la fourmi* (The cicada and the ant)
- *Le lion amoureux* (The lion in love)
- *L'homme entre deux âges et ses deux maîtresses* (The middle-aged man and his two mistresses)
- *La mort et le bûcheron* (Death and the woodcutter)
- *Le combat des deux coqs* (The battle of the two roosters)
- Le repas de midi (Lunchtime)

The ballet company for the 1942 premiere was headed by Ukrainian ballet dancer Serge Lifar (who also choreographed the work) and French prima ballerina Yvette Chauviré. Paris was under Nazi occupation, and the many German officers in the audience failed to spot the composer's defiant quotation of the anti-German popular French song *Non, non, vous n'aurez pas notre Alsace-Lorraine* (No, No, You shall not have Alsace-Lorraine) in the penultimate section of his score. He wrote of its conception, 'in the darkest days of the summer of 1940, and one way or another I wanted to find a reason for hope in the future of my country'.

Havlat's interest in *Les Animaux modèles* came from his familiarity performing Poulenc's best-known work for piano and narrator, *L'Histoire de Babar, le petit éléphant* (1940-45). 'Allegedly, he improvised the



### JOSEPH HAVLAT

Joseph was born in Hobart, Australia, and studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London from 2012 to 2018. Joseph has performed in major concert venues around the UK and in Europe, America, Japan and Australia as a soloist and as part of chamber groups and orchestras.

just a new narration – aware that the visual aspect to the performance is still lost when compared to a traditional ballet production of the work, Joseph suggested that it would be fun to collaborate with various contemporary artists interpreting the scenes. This cross-collaboration of *Les Animaux modèles* will make its production debut at Royal Over-Seas League, Princess Alexandra Hall on Friday 2 September 2022 (tickets will be made available at [rosl.org.uk/events](https://rosl.org.uk/events)), 80 years since Poulenc's ballet was first performed.

Alongside Joseph Havlat's solo piano, we are excited to announce the role of narrator will be ably fulfilled by BBC Radio 4 announcer, newsreader and voice of *The Shipping Forecast*, Zeb Soanes. He has announced some of the biggest events in recent years and Soanes' long association

music when on holiday with his cousins, their children demanding that he 'play' the story book on the piano.

The music, therefore, has a natural pictorial quality to it, in lieu of illustrations, Joseph comments. 'It got me thinking that a similar approach could be made to many ballet scores that exist in solo-piano form.'

Consulting the original fable text and the directions already in the score, he set about commissioning a translation to be read alongside the music in a similar style to *Babar*.

But he wasn't finished with

with *The Shipping Forecast* has led him to read it from the top of a lighthouse, at the closing ceremony of the Beijing Olympics and to open London Fashion Week; *Vogue* magazine described him as 'a BBC radio presenter whose voice sounds like a massage feels'.

For this special concert *Les Animaux modèles* will be paired with Camille Saint-Saëns' *The Carnival of the Animals*, which was last performed at ROSL during the 2006 opening of Princess Alexandra Hall. To introduce each animal, Zeb Soanes as narrator will read Roger McGough's entertaining poems, specially written to accompany the music. A performance not to be missed consisting of two pianos, a string quintet, flute, clarinet and xylophone.

*Les Animaux modèles* will also be presented as a group art exhibition in the Central Lounge (15 July – 18 September 2022), showing a display of the new performance interpretation of de La Fontaine's *Fables* translated text and artwork by contemporary visual artists Matilda Barretta, Laura Bygrave, Bill Daggs, Yun Kim, Miro King and Kalman Pool all of which have been selected to collaborate with Joseph Havlat to produce stageworks for September. We are delighted to announce the loan acquisition of two original hand-painted etchings by influential modern artist Marc Chagall (1887-1985), *Lours et les Deux Compagnons* (1952) and *La Mort et le Bûcheron* (1952) as contextual artworks on display. Originally commissioned by the influential French art dealer Ambroise Vollard, Chagall's *Les Fables de la Fontaine* is considered one of the great print suites of the 20th century. This loan is generously provided by Goldmark Gallery, Rutland as one of only 85 sets hand-painted by Chagall himself (available for sale, for more information contact [roslarts@rosl.org.uk](mailto:roslarts@rosl.org.uk)).

Rarely does an opportunity to observe the growth of a young artist and performer come along with this much ambition. Follow the journey of this project all summer long and join us at the Private View of *Les Animaux modèles* exhibition on Thursday 14 July, 6 – 8pm and the ROSL performance of *Les Animaux modèles* and *The Carnival of the Animals* featuring Joseph Havlat and Zeb Soanes as narrator, scheduled Friday 2 September, 7 – 9pm.

### BOOK NOW

Visit [www.rosl.org.uk/events](https://www.rosl.org.uk/events) to book tickets



Two original hand-painted etchings by influential modern artist Marc Chagall, including *Lours et les Deux Compagnons* (main), along with Miro King's *Watch* (inset) will be on display in the Central Lounge between 15 July and 17 September



## THE ARTS REPORT

# What to see this summer

As the weather warms and with lockdown restrictions fully lifted, this summer promises a treat for art and theatre-lovers, with galleries and venues throwing open their doors for a bumper season of sensorial treats. Here the ROSL ARTS Team round up their must-see events for the season across the UK



My Fair Lady, Until 27 August, London Coliseum



**Geoff Parkin**  
Artistic Director

## MY FAIR LADY

Until 27 August, London Coliseum

For several years now English National Opera have partnered with the musical theatre world to present a summer musical at The London Coliseum, and it is hard to resist recommending *My Fair Lady* this year, just a stone's throw away from the Covent Garden flower market where Henry Higgins first encounters Eliza Doolittle! As a teenager I remember playing in the school orchestra for our production of this classic show, but the chance to hear the score performed in full glory by the Orchestra of English National Opera is not to be missed.

With a cast including Dame Vanessa Redgrave, Amara Okereke and Harry Haddon-Paton and only a leisurely stroll

away from the ROSL clubhouse, it will make a lovely summer evening!



**Robin Footitt**  
ROSL Arts Coordinator

Summer is always the perfect opportunity to travel a bit further afield and I like nothing more than a day trip visiting some of the amazing art spaces around the UK. Hoping for good weather and great times ahead!

## ALI KAZIM: SUSPENDED IN TIME

Until 26 June 2022,  
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

2005 ROSL International Travel Scholar Ali Kazim's (b. 1979, Pattoki, Pakistan) solo exhibition *Suspended in Time* shows 23 works including new pieces made from

2019-21, alongside objects from the Ashmolean's collections which have inspired Kazim's work. The exhibition will be the culmination of his time as Oxford University's first South Asian Artist-in-Residence.

## BRITISH ART SHOW 9

Until 4 September 2022,  
Castlefield Gallery, Manchester

A survey show of contemporary art in Britain today presented every five years, *British Art Show 9* has been touring the UK since the summer of 2021 (starting in Aberdeen, Wolverhampton, Manchester and ending with Plymouth 8 Oct – 23 Dec), exploring three overarching themes – healing, care and reparative history; tactics for togetherness; and imagining new futures. On its penultimate stop at Castlefield



Fashioning Masculinities: The Art of Menswear  
Until 6 November, Victoria & Albert Museum, London

Gallery in Manchester the focus will be on how technology, in particular Artificial Intelligence, is radically transforming how we work and connect with others.

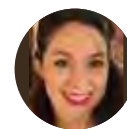
## BARBARA HEPWORTH: ART & LIFE

Until 2 October 2022, Scottish National  
Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh

An opportunity to see a major career-spanning retrospective of influential 20<sup>th</sup>-century sculptor Barbara Hepworth featuring over 120 works lent from public and private collections, including renowned sculptures as well as rarely seen drawings and paintings. It spans the artist's entire career charting the development of her practice, her engagement with political and societal change, and the events in her personal life which shaped her work.

## An opportunity to see a major career-spanning retrospective of influential 20<sup>th</sup>-century sculptor Barbara Hepworth featuring over 120 works

**FASHIONING MASCULINITIES:  
THE ART OF MENSWEAR**  
Until 6 November,  
Victoria & Albert Museum, London  
*Fashioning Masculinities: The Art of Menswear* is the first major V&A exhibition to celebrate the power, artistry and diversity of masculine attire and appearance. The exhibition presents around 100 looks alongside 100 artworks, displayed thematically across three galleries, Undressed, Overdressed, and Redressed.



**Rosie Allen**  
Overseas Editor

While October may enjoy the title of official 'spooky season' I'm inclined to think that the lengthened twilights, sultry heat and brooding landscapes of late summer lend themselves even better to the enjoyment of all things uncanny. With that in mind, I'll be taking a trip to the weird, with a new adaptation of Lovecraft's works and an exhibition on the enigmatic and mysterious iconography of Ancient Egypt.

## NUNKIE THEATRE – GALLERY OF SCREAMS: TWO TALES OF ELDRITCH HORROR

Various nationwide, starting 1 June at the  
Drama Studio in Sheffield

Robert Lloyd Parry's acclaimed performances as master of the uncanny, M.R James, have attained cult-like status over the years, with *The Washington Post* declaring his eerily immersive storytelling 'utterly mesmerising'.

This summer, Parry will be paying tribute to H.P Lovecraft, James's 'exact contemporary – a stranger, sadder man but one with an arguably even greater talent for bringing nightmares to life'. Gallery of Screams, features two stories from Lovecraft's creepy

Nunkie Theatre – Gallery of  
Screams: Two tales of eldritch  
horror, Various nationwide,  
starting 1 June at the  
Drama Studio in Sheffield



cannon: *Pickman's Model* in which a genius is 'shunned by the artistic establishment because of the sickening realism of his canvases' and *The Music of Eric Zann*, an unsettling tale of inspiration and possession.

Starting 1 June in Sheffield the show will be unfurling its Lovecraftian tentacles of eldritch terror across York, Southgate, Bath and more. A real treat for fans of vintage horror, weird fiction and top-notch storytelling.

For full details visit [www.nunkie.co.uk/schedule](http://www.nunkie.co.uk/schedule)

## VISIONS OF ANCIENT EGYPT

From 3 September,  
Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts

There are many cultural reasons to take a trip to Norwich – the cavernously beautiful cathedral, an art-house cinema built inside a 17<sup>th</sup>-century suckling house – and the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Art is certainly up there. Nestled in the grounds of the University of East Anglia, it's full of intriguing objects and exhibitions for the art-curious, not least this deep dive into the impact of Ancient Egyptian art and iconography for on our cultural imaginations. One to pencil in for late summer.



## ROOTED BEINGS

Until 29 August 2022,  
Wellcome Collection, London

*Rooted Beings* at the Wellcome Collection encourages visitors to meditate on the world of plants and fungi. The exhibition considers what lessons we might learn from plant behaviour and indigenous knowledge.

## OUR TIME ON EARTH

Until 29 Aug 2022, *The Curve*, London

*Our Time on Earth* at The Barbican Centre investigates how technology can actually bring us closer to the natural world with a nature-driven narrative for the story of our future.

Rooted Beings at the Wellcome Collection encourages visitors to meditate on the world of plants and fungi



Cerys Beesley  
ROSL Arts Coordinator

For me, summer in London usually means more daylight hours and more time to explore the cultural delights of the city.

## KING LEAR

Until 24 July, *The Globe Theatre*, London

To name a few, this summer at Shakespeare's Globe, Kathryn Hunter takes on the weighty crown of *King Lear*, and having been lucky enough to witness her *Richard III* in 2003, this is sure to be an unmissable production.

LEGALLY BLONDE (until 2 July),  
101 DALMATIANS (until 28 August) and ANTIGONE (until 24 September)

All Regents Park Open Air Theatre, London

Regents Park Open Air Theatre's impressive offering features a new revival of *Legally Blonde*, a new musical version of *101 Dalmatians* and a blistering retelling of *Antigone* by Inua Williams which after his smash hit *Barbershop Chronicles* captured the hearts of London in 2018, is sure to be a compelling new version.

## BBC PROMS

15 July-10 September,  
Royal Albert Hall, London

Finally, my summer is never complete without taking in a couple of BBC Proms, promming upstairs in the Gallery - which for me is always the better place to hear in the cavernous Royal Albert Hall. As I write this, the guide is yet to be released, but I always look forward to seeing a lovely representation of our ROSL Alumni as both soloists and ensemble members.

Around the UK, I look forward to seeing Chichester Festival Theatre's summer programme, and this year I'm very much looking forward to the new revival of the brilliant Gershwin pastiche *Crazy for You*. Head further West, where Hall for Cornwall in Truro has just reopened after extensive refurbishment and with more companies of the calibre of Wise Children, National Theatre and WNO visiting, there is something for everyone. And if you don't mind feeling a bit windswept whilst watching a show, the Minack Theatre is worth a visit for the views across the Atlantic alone.

In the 75th Anniversary of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, I am thrilled that we are continuing our ROSL Recitals series and showcase the brilliant ROSL Alumni on this international platform. Whilst we are working in Edinburgh, I am particularly excited to see what Summerhall have on offer this year, as well as the international festival's bringing a mixture of international companies and artists across all genres.

Minack Theatre,  
Porthcurno, Cornwall



Rooted Beings, until 29 August 2022,  
Wellcome Collection

Mandrake, Patricia Dominguez

## NEWS &amp; EVENTS

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

## ROSL Gold Medal Final 2022 finds its home in Wigmore Hall

Artistic Director Geoff Parkin explains why historic and prestigious Wigmore Hall is the perfect venue for the ROSL Gold Medal Final this summer



For the first time in over 40 years the ROSL Gold Medal Final (Thursday 7 July) will be held at London's world-renowned Wigmore Hall. ROSL's grand final has been held in a number of different venues over the decades, including the Queen Elizabeth Hall at the Southbank Centre, Cadogan Hall near Sloane Square, and our very own Princess Alexandra Hall here at ROSL.

For young musicians starting out in their careers, the accolade of having performed at Wigmore is certainly one that is highly prized, and I am pleased that this year's finalists and ensemble winners will be able to add this to their CVs.

The hall was built on Wigmore Street between 1899-1901 by the Bechstein Piano Company, who had their showroom next door, and was named Bechstein Hall until the company were forced to cease trading during the First World War. Renamed Wigmore Hall in 1917, the venue is

regarded worldwide for its naturally brilliant acoustics for chamber music and lieder, and programmes a year-round season presenting some of the finest musicians around.

Following our section finals in February and March the musicians competing for our £15,000 gold medal prize will be Daniel Scott (pictured) on recorder, George Todica on piano, James Atkinson, baritone voice and Jack Hancher on guitar. While the judges deliberations take place in the second half there will be short performances from our two prizewinning ensembles, the Paddington Trio and Connaught Brass.

We are honored that our vice-patron HRH Princess Alexandra has agreed to attend and will present the coveted ROSL Gold Medal at the end of the evening.



This special event really is one of the jewels in ROSL's crown and tickets are available to buy directly from Wigmore Hall on [www.wigmore-hall.org.uk](http://www.wigmore-hall.org.uk)







## A fresh look for our front gates and staircase

As part of the renovation work taking place at Over-Seas House, two of our historic outside features will be getting a much-needed makeover to bring them back to their former glory

You may have noticed the entrance gates, which have welcomed ROSL members for over a century, have been removed, with a specialist restoration team, Hannafords, taking on the task of bringing these iconic features back to life. The surrounding stone piers and masonry will be given some TLC too, having been damaged both by vehicles and general deterioration from decades of use, with a deep clean and repaint, along with restoration and redecoration of the beautiful scrollwork on the vintage lanterns which sit on either

side of the doors.

On the doors themselves, missing bronze studs have been replaced and the ornate wrought iron work is being partially replicated in modern resin.

The historic Victorian iron staircase which previously led from the Brabourne Room into the garden is also undergoing renovation to restore its original features and ensure that it meets safety guidelines. We hope you'll be able to benefit from the fruits of the restorer's labours this summer.

### DON'T MISS...

## RBA RISING STARS

It's your last chance to immerse yourself in a stunning collection of work from the stars of the future, at this exhibition celebrating the bright young things of the contemporary art world. Hosted in partnership with the Royal Society of British Artists, this collaboration, now in its fifth year, showcases the extraordinary talent of 40 artists, all under 35, shortlisted for the RBA Rome Scholarship 2022. Amongst other awards for the finalists is a one-month residency at Sala Uno, an arts centre in the heart of Rome.

Showing at the ROSL Clubhouse until 3 July.



Alice Miller, Pale Blue

## STAFF CHANGES

The beginning of 2022 has seen two new staff appointments. James Pitts joined ROSL as Chief Engineer in early March, having previously occupied the role at Hilton Paddington & Euston hotels and many well-known London hotels such as the Mandarin Oriental and Belgraves.

Also joining us in early March was Rosie Allen, as the Editor of *Overseas* magazine. Rosie joins us from a role as Brand Marketing Manager at The Wine Society, where she was the founding Editor of *1874* magazine.

We wish a warm welcome to both James and Rosie.



## Reimagining the muse

Rosie Allen looks back on our exhibition which challenged art lovers to reframe our view of the muse

In Ancient Greek mythology, the Muses were the nine daughters of Zeus; nymphs who became the embodiment of sensorial and intellectual nourishment, representing music, poetry, art, language and theatre. But somewhere along the line, filtered through the gaze of artists, photographers and poets, the idea of the 'muse' became passive, losing agency as creative force in its own right.

In this series we've challenged viewers to reimagine our perception of who and what a muse really is, re-evaluating the stereotype of the model as the submissive subject of the older, usually male, artist and examining the creativity, support and intellectual energy that these unsung heroines have brought to so many important works of art.

Inspired by the ideas explored in Ruth Millington's book *Muse, Muse: The Exhibition* displayed work by international contemporary artists Sunil Gupta, Kim Leutwyler, Pixy Liao and Nilupa Yasmin alongside contextual work loaned from The Estate of Francis Bacon, presenting a fresh look at the muse from

a range of cultural, sexual and political perspectives.

We were also thrilled to host Sue Tilley – Lucian Freud muse and subject of some of his most iconic paintings – for a life drawing session followed by a Q&A at Overseas House, with budding artists joining us for an evening of insight and the chance to sketch one of British modern art's most recognisable muses.

A panel event featuring author Ruth Millington, art historian Dr David Bellingham, curator and lecturer Dr Amy Mechowski and media producer Dan Vo, tackled the thorny subject of whether the muse has had its day, in 'Does the Muse have a Place in the Modern World?'.

The season wrapped up with an event based on the book which inspired it all: an art talk with Ruth Millington, author of *Muse*, along with Editor Mireille Harper and Illustrator Dina Razin, who delved into the rich history of the subject and explained their reinterpretation of the concept for a modern age.

“  
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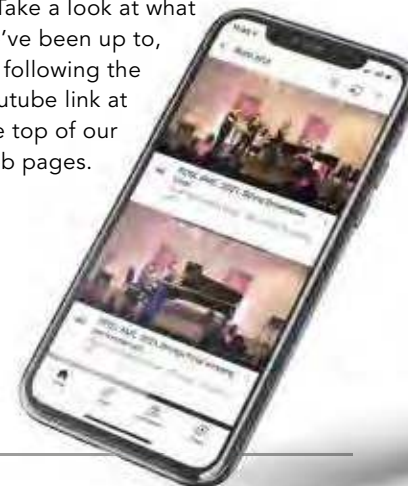
The Muse series included work from contemporary artist Nilupa Yasmin (left) and a life drawing session and Q&A with Sue Tilley, the subject of some of Freud's most iconic paintings



## Staying connected

During the pandemic you may have seen that ROSL ARTS provided much additional content online but did you know that many events based at the London Clubhouse are available on our Royal Overseas League YouTube Channel? From the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Music Competition section finals to book talks by the Codebreaking Sisters of Bletchley Park and biographer Andrew Lownie, ROSL is proud to offer over 100 videos of free entertainment for you to enjoy.

Take a look at what we've been up to, by following the Youtube link at the top of our web pages.





## Supporting Namibia's Mondesa Youth Opportunities

Director of Education Projects, Margaret Adrian-Vallance, gives an update on our education projects in Namibia

Due to the Dr Donald Valentine legacy, the ROSL-Namibia project is helping communities in three very different locations.

At Mondesa Youth Opportunities, Swakopmund, the project funds maths, reading and English classes for 117 learners from townships. MYO's Manager, Anke Husemayer says, 'many government schools are still operating on 2-3 days a week, but MYO is open every day. It is a pleasure to work with these bright



souls who are so determined to learn but the educational system, already in crisis before the pandemic, now faces long-term consequences. However, MYO students are flourishing, and we are so thankful for ROSL's fantastic support.'

In the Nyae Nyae Conservancy where there are more elephants than laptops, the project funds Ju/'hoan mother tongue literacy and business enterprise classes. Challenges include the tyranny of

distance, transport over sand roads and little electricity. 'Some students also find it hard to attend due to family matters or during devil's claw harvesting', says co-ordinator Benediktus Motlatia, 'But others are consistently present, and we thank ROSL so much for all your help.'

At the University of Namibia in Windhoek, the legacy funds bursaries for those studying education, now needed more than ever in an educational catch-up, post lockdown future.

## Code-breaking sisters tell their incredible story

Earlier this year we were joined by nonagenarian sisters Patricia and Jean Owtram, the last living sisters to have signed the wartime Official Secrets Act, to tell us their incredible story

During the sold-out event Patricia and Jean explained how their life went from a charmed 1920s childhood in a Lancashire country house, to vital roles in the British intelligence service following the outbreak of war. Patricia would go on to volunteer for the Wrens, posted at top-secret listening stations along the British coast, before being tasked with intercepting German shipping radio in a bid to crack the Enigma Code.

Jean meanwhile took on a secretive role as Code & Cipher Officer in the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry for S.O.E (Special Operations Executive). At just 18 years of age, Jean was posted to Cairo, before moving on to Italy to aid the Partisan and allied agents fighting against the Nazis.

The evening included a special

codebreaking demonstration from Patricia using a machine similar to that used at Bletchley Park, and the sisters were kind enough to stay after the event, signing books for the many members who'd come along to meet them.

If you missed it, watch the event on ROSL's YouTube channel.



## Public affairs series goes from strength to strength

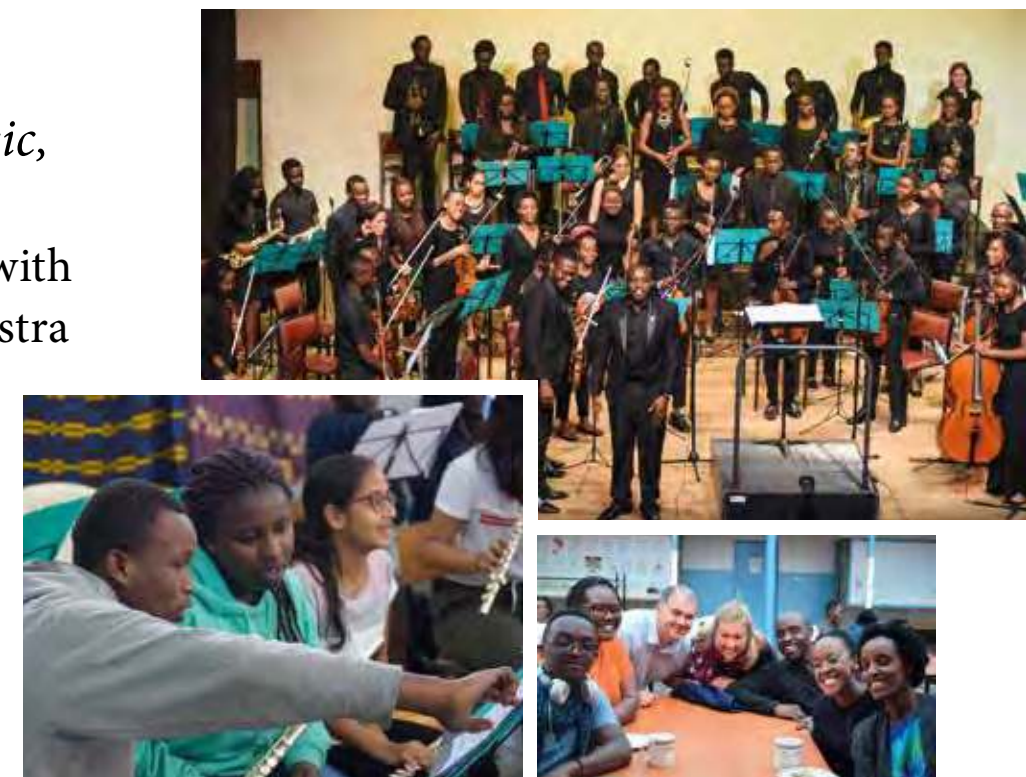
Our Public Affairs series of events and talks have proved very popular this year, with an impressive roster of past speakers including Rt Hon Jack Straw, Lord Chris Patten, Kwasi Kwarteng MP and journalist Camilla Tominey. We'll be continuing the series with some very special guest speakers in autumn and beyond – keep an eye on our events space to see what we have in store.

Young members of the National Youth Orchestra of Kenya, where support from ROSL is enabling crucial work in nurturing musicianship and leadership skills in youth from less-privileged backgrounds

## 'Hard work, good music, positive energy' Hitting the high notes with the Kenya Youth Orchestra

As the founder of The Art of Music foundation in Kenya, Elizabeth Njoroge has a passion for music as a force for positive social change. The foundation enables children from less-privileged backgrounds access to music and mentoring, and includes the ROSL-supported National Youth Orchestra of Kenya, which develops young musician's transferable skills, leadership capability and development through creative endeavors. Thanks to a generous legacy from the estate of Mr Robert Wainwright, ROSL will be supporting a number of workshops and residential courses with the National Youth Orchestra of Kenya over the next two years. Here Elizabeth talks to us about inspiring a new generation of 'great Kenyans' whose impact she hopes will be felt across the globe.

At the National Youth Orchestra of Kenya (commonly known as KNYO) our members are from different socio-economic, ethnic and regional backgrounds, with their age ranging between 14 and 23; we meet for a week, three times a year during the school holidays, joined by the best instrumental tutors in the country and beyond. During these residential sessions, members have five intensive training days which, not only builds their musicianship, but also trains them to be great Kenyans who will be mentors to their peers. We take pride in nurturing leadership



potential among young local musicians through orchestral music.

By pursuing and encouraging excellence we believe we are setting a benchmark for our country, and giving talented youth something to aspire to.

Watching the development of the members through the week is always fascinating, as they grow their musicianship and discover their leadership potential through various musical and non-musical activities; all this while they make new friends and create memories. The concert at the end of the residential is always electric, a culmination of hard work, good music and positive energy. Whereas the goodbyes are always emotional, the connections made are lifelong.

KNYO runs under the umbrella of The Art of Music Foundation, whose aim is to make a difference in communities using art and music. The foundation also runs the community-based Ghetto Classics programme, with a vision of creating a network of community music programmes that all link up to a national ensemble of the highest standard. The two operate

like siblings who support each other in good moments as well as challenging ones. Young players from Ghetto Classics work towards joining KNYO, while a number of KNYO members and alumni are mentors and tutors at Ghetto Classics. An argument could be made as to who's the 'bigger' sibling, but the synergy between the two groups is quite significant.

Over the course of our existence, we have been tested; growth is always uncomfortable, however, we have learnt valuable lessons and made beautiful stories along the way. Our impact cuts across various boundaries, professional fields and geographical zones; we have friends and alumni all around the world, each uniquely exploiting their leadership potential. It's always exciting to be a part of the KNYO experience and, since the pandemic has taught the world that innovation is key to survival, the stakes seem even higher. Collective participation bears diverse fruit, and, together, we are always looking forward to developing as the next generation of leaders, not only for Kenya, but for the globe.



# 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.

AUSTRALIA

Tasmania

We're pleased to announce two upcoming events:

**The Queen's Birthday luncheon**  
Tuesday 14 June, 12pm,  
Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania  
Join us to celebrate the Queen's birthday, with Governor H.E. Honourable Barbara Baker AC as guest speaker.

**Spring luncheon**  
Wednesday 19 October, 12pm, Succulent Restaurant in the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens  
More details will be available in the next edition of Overseas in September.

Western Australia

Activities in the Branch will recommence as soon as State Covid regulations allow. Specifically, Concerts by the WAAPA (ECU) music students vying for the WA ROSL Awards 2022; and the concerts in association with the Royal School of Music Clubs will take place.

**Gala Dinner**  
Saturday, August 27, 6.30pm, The Weld Club, Barrack Street, Perth  
A Gala Dinner in celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Contact the Secretary / Treasurer on guy@bookkeepingcomplete.com.au and names will be registered and confirmation will be made in due course. The same email address may be used to request information at any time; alternately contact the Chairman WA Branch on kathowen@bigpond.net.au

**Victoria**  
**Angliss Luncheon**  
Friday 8 April, Victorian Branch  
Our special guest for this luncheon is High Commissioner to Australia, Her Excellency Vicki Treadell CMG, MVO for a tribute celebrating the life of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, Earl of Merioneth and Baron Greenwich. This is the Victorian branch's annual member luncheon and supports the students attending the William Angliss Institute which specialises in providing training and vocational education in hospitality, tourism and culinary arts.



**Royal Over-Seas League Victorian Branch Annual General Meeting**  
Tuesday 24 May, 10.30am, ANZAC House

**Dr. Di Bresciani OAM Open Studio exhibition**  
Thursday 7 July between 6 – 8pm. Dr Bresciani's art is also being exhibited at Overseas House in London in September.

Members wishing to attend any of the events should contact the branch secretary Keir Watt by phone 03 9654 8338 or email rosl@alphalink.com.au

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

At the Christchurch ROSL branch we hold a monthly morning meeting with a speaker at Holly Lea Retirement Village. We'll also be renewing our annual scholarship to a talented young pupil for a Specialist Music Programme from a local primary school.

We also have some special events planned for June:

**Platinum Jubilee High Tea**  
Saturday 4 June, 2pm, Venue tbc, \$45 per person  
We plan to hold a special 'high tea' to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, which will be held in the beautiful setting of a gracious Victorian homestead.

## 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](http://www.rosl.org.uk/supportus)



**Rangi Ruru Girls' School choir and chamber music concert**  
Monthly meeting Wednesday 8 June, 2pm, Holly Lea Retirement Village, \$10 per person  
Our monthly meeting will be a musical concert with a choir and chamber music group from a prestigious private girls' school here in Christchurch – Rangi Ruru Girls' School, which was established in 1889 and has a renowned history throughout New Zealand. The concert will be followed by afternoon tea.

CANADA

British Colombia

On Feb 24, a small group of ROSL members from the British Columbia Chapter met for the first time since Covid

and attended the exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery to enjoy For All Time: The Shakespeare First Folio Exhibition, followed by lunch nearby. We all felt it was good to get out and meet after such a long absence caused by the Covid crisis and restrictions.

UNITED KINGDOM

Sussex

**Lunch at The Windsor Hotel**  
Wednesday 22 June, 12.30pm, The Windsor hotel in Worthing, £24 per person  
Attendees are welcome to bring a guest to this summer lunch, with a guest speaker to be confirmed.  
Further details and booking form are available from the secretary Mike Beaman on [beaman\\_mw@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:beaman_mw@yahoo.co.uk)

London Group

The London Group have a lively calendar of events planned for the warmer months: the first is a talk from historian Tim Potter on Tuesday 5 July, 6pm, the subject of which will be 'Great Women of Bow: Four extraordinary women who worked in Bow at the turn of the twentieth century'. This will be followed by a group visit to the City of London's historic Vintners' Hall on Thursday 14 July, 11am.

The London Group have also been planning for their autumn calendar, including a visit to the iconic and beautiful London Library, so do keep an eye out for more happenings from September and beyond.

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With a roster of fascinating guest speakers, a sensational calendar of music and a thought-provoking new exhibition, ROSL has all your cultural needs taken care of this summer

Book Talk: WWII Army Girls & Navy Girls  
Tuesday 21 June, 6.30pm

Enjoy a fascinating evening commemorating the 80th anniversary of conscription for women, where we'll be joined by 98 year-old Joyce Wilding and 101 year-old Christian Lamb who will tell the story of their extraordinary war.

Aged 18 Joyce joined the elite First Aid Nursing Yeomanry and became an SOE assistant and later a corporal and driver. Christian Lamb joined the Women's Royal Naval Service and plotted her fiancé's convoy during the Battle of the Atlantic, rising to officer rank. Hosted by best-selling author and historian Dr Tessa Dunlop, you'll get the chance to discover the human stories behind a time when government thinking on women in the military took a U-turn, and girls as young as 17 served King and country in



uniform. Expect a poignant yet joy-filled talk full of wisdom and humour.

Tickets include a glass of wine after the talk and are priced at £12 ROSL Members, £16 General Admission.

Public Affairs Series: Rt Hon Lord Robertson KT, GCMG, FRSA, FRSE  
Monday 11 July, 6.30pm

With the future of European security very much on people's minds following the recent invasion of Ukraine, we present an evening with The Rt Hon Lord Robertson KT, GCMG, HonFRSE, PC, the tenth Secretary General of NATO between 1999 and 2004. Lord Robertson will talk us through his accomplished career, which has seen him undertake roles such as Member of Parliament for Hamilton and Hamilton South, the opposition spokesman on Defence in the early 1980s and



Secretary of State for Defence from 1997 to 1999. In 1993 he was named joint Parliamentarian of the Year for his role during the Maastricht Treaty ratification.

A fascinating evening for anyone interested in the behind-the-scenes intrigue of politics and the future of European defence.

Ticket includes a glass of wine after the talk, and are priced at £10 ROSL Members and £12.50 non-members.

MEMBER-LED ACTIVITIES

ROSL BOOK GROUP

The ROSL Book Group usually meets in person at the Club, and on Zoom when necessary, 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. Look out for the books chosen for June to November 2022, in the e-newsletter.

ROSL BRIDGE CLUB

The Bridge Club is now meeting at ROSL with a truly excellent tutor. We meet every Monday 2 - 4pm (except on Bank Holidays) and play duplicate ACOL. Once a month there is a refresher course. New members are welcome. Lunch at 1pm is optional. Cost: £10 pp for supervised play and £20 pp for monthly refresher course sessions.

ROSL BACKGAMMON CLUB

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

ROSL THEATRE & OPERA GROUP

We go regularly to the theatre, opera, ballet and modern dance. We also go to Glyndebourne twice a year in Summer and Autumn.

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

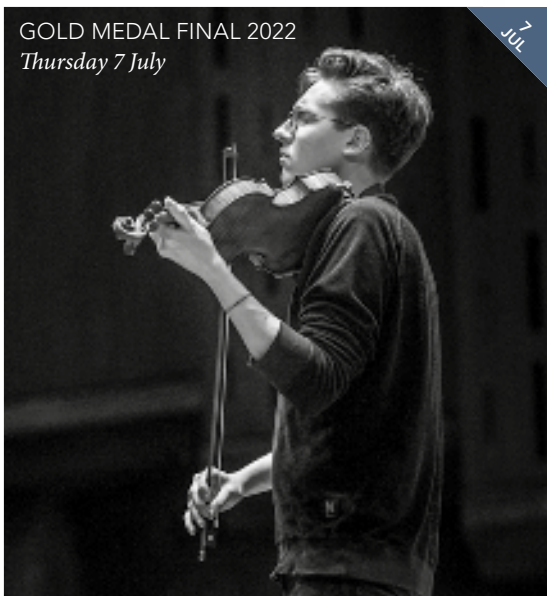
DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Go online to get full details and book your next event at [www.rosl.org.uk/events](http://www.rosl.org.uk/events)

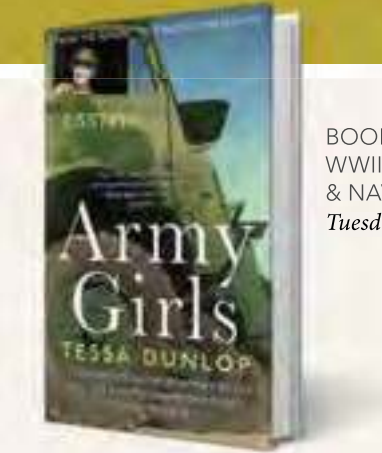


CENTENARY GALA CONCERT & DINNER WITH JOSEPH CALLEJA  
Monday 13 June

GOLD MEDAL FINAL 2022  
Thursday 7 July



SHAKESPEARE IN THE GARDEN: TWELFTH NIGHT  
Monday 6 June



BOOK TALK: WWII ARMY GIRLS & NAVY GIRLS  
Tuesday 21 June

AURORA PERCUSSION DUO CONCERT  
Wednesday 29 June

HOUSEHOLD DIVISION MILITARY MUSICAL SPECTACULAR  
Tuesday 5 July

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SERIES: RT HON LORD ROBERTSON KT GCMG PC FRSA FRSE  
Monday 11 July



EDINBURGH FRINGE FORTNIGHT  
Monday 8 - Thursday 18 August

EXHIBITION OPENING FOR LES ANIMAUX MODÈLES  
Thursday 14 July



Kalman Pool, couple





# THE PASS IT ON PLEDGE

When you're finished with your copy of *Overseas*, please don't throw it straight into the recycling, pass it on!

We're encouraging our members to spread the word, so if you know any non-members that might enjoy reading the articles and the great window they provide into the world of ROSL, please pass it on to them.

If they end up becoming a member, you could even be entered into our prize draw to win a hamper from Davy's if they mention you on their application, as part of our 'Propose a Friend' scheme.

[www.rosl.org.uk/proposeafriend](http://www.rosl.org.uk/proposeafriend)