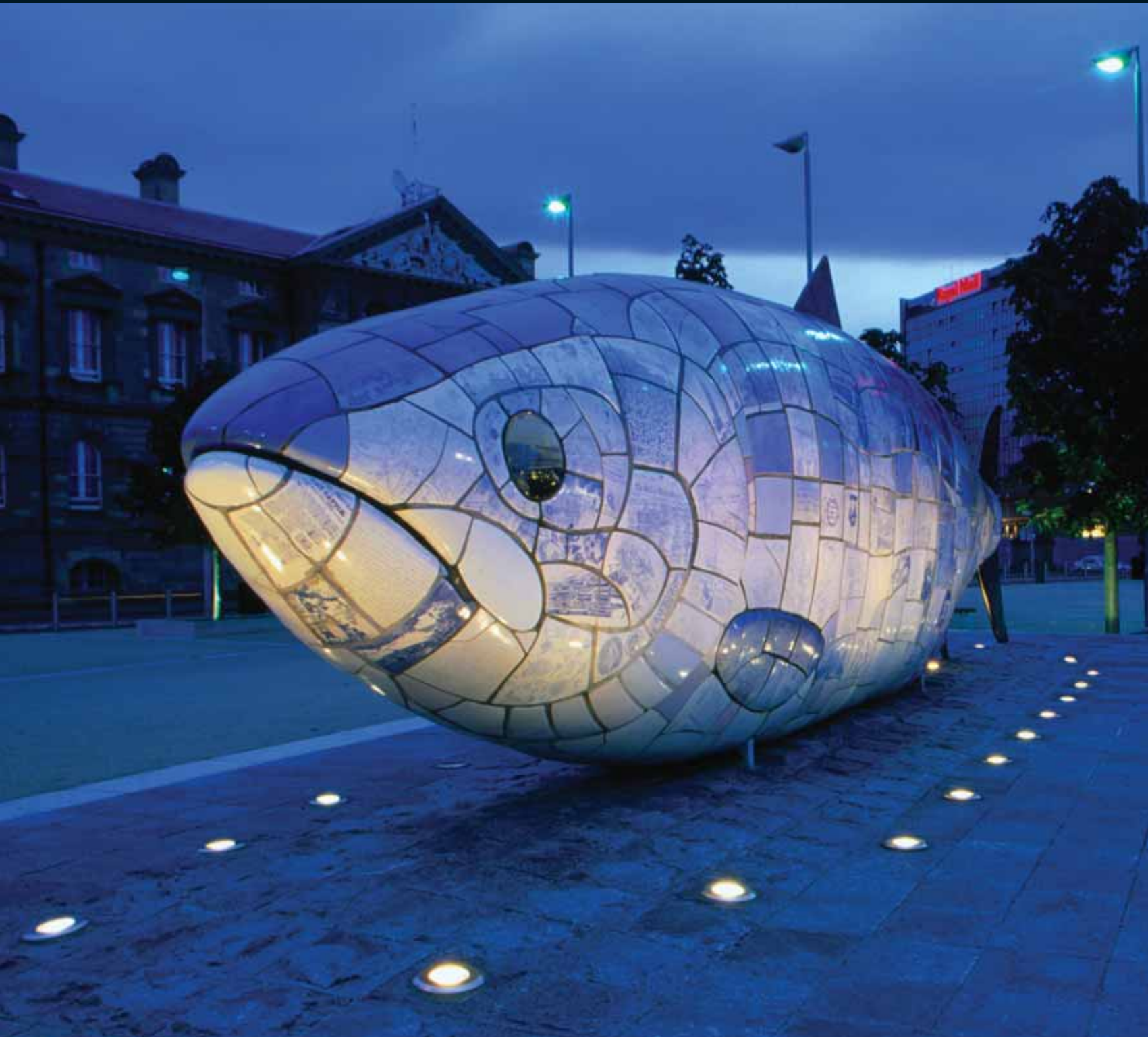


OVERSEAS

Journal of the Royal Over-Seas League

Issue 3, September–November 2008



Beyond Good Friday

The Troubles are now a tourist attraction, but can N Ireland keep the peace?

Vision of success

Kamalesh Sharma outlines his priorities for the Commonwealth

Grand finale

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Brixton stories

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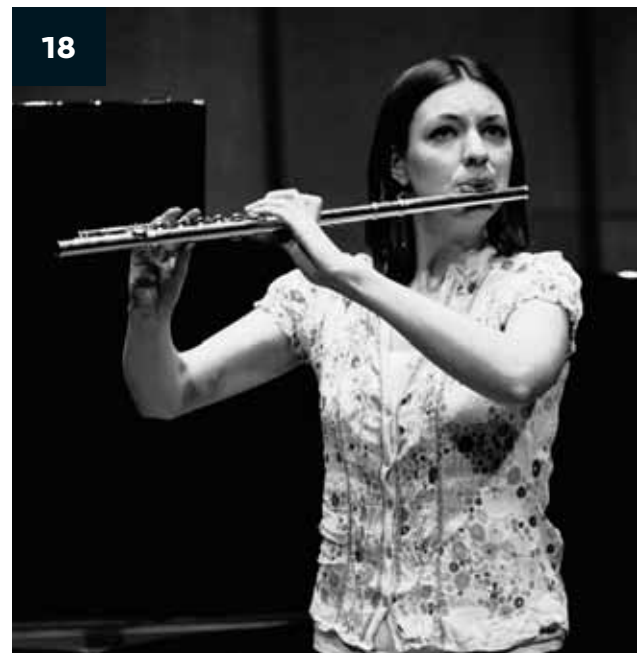
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OVERSEAS

ISSUE 3 September–November 2008

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**From the director-general;
editor's letter 4**

World

The way forward 5

Commonwealth Secretary General Kamalesh Sharma explains his future aspirations

Emerging from tragedy 7

League member Ian Richards takes a fresh look at Rwanda

City on the rise 8

Tim Hedgley on Belfast's meteoric rise to become a major holiday destination

The next 10 years 10

Malachi O'Doherty looks to the next generation of leaders to keep the peace

A language of our own 12

Diarmait Mac Giolla Chríost asks if the conflict in Northern Ireland has shifted to language

League News

Grog's notebook 14

News from Over-Seas House, London

A winning formula 16

An overview of younger members' events

**ROSL 56th Annual
Music Competition 18**

An insider's view of this year's event, with details of the winning performances

A president in the Garter .. 21

Stanley Martin reports on ROSL President Lord Luce's appointment to the Order of the Garter

ROSL World 22

A round-up of branch activities in the UK and overseas

The view from Scotland .. 25

Events at the Edinburgh clubhouse

Access all areas 25

Report on the new facilities for disabled visitors to Over-Seas House

In the UK

Movement of the people .. 26

Cecilia Thom takes a walking tour of Brixton for Black History Month

In London 27

Concert pianist Miaomiao Yu shares what she loves about London, plus what's on in the arts

Through the keyhole 28

Samantha Whitaker uncovers some architectural gems as Open House London approaches

Mid-week wonders 29

Margaret Adrian-Vallance takes a short break to Tuscany from Over-Seas House, London

Arts in the city 29

A preview of what's on in Edinburgh

Events

**What's on: Edinburgh
and Glasgow 30**

ROSL ARTS 31

Food and drink 33

Members' events 35

**Discussion Group and
London Group 38**

Front cover: "Big Fish" sculpture, Donegal Quay, Belfast © Richard Cummins/LPI

From the Director-general

It was a pleasant surprise to see the Hon. Kent Durr and his wife Suzy at my Tuesday evening reception for resident members in June. Kent was the South African Ambassador in London when I became director-general in 1991, and we used to meet at his office to discuss what would happen after Nelson Mandela was released from gaol and whether South Africa would rejoin the Commonwealth. We were both optimistic that the transition to a non-racial democracy would be achieved peacefully, while much of the media, which predicted violence and chaos during the elections in 1994, was proved wrong. I remember Kent telling me how enthusiastic he was for his country to rejoin the Commonwealth, and he did much personally to bring this about. It was then that he realised his ambition to become High Commissioner. Our meeting was significant, coming so close to Mandela's 90th birthday.

The next day, Meryl Kloppe from Cape Town called on me with the sad news of the death of her husband. Jack Kloppe OBE joined the League in 1962. He was the League's representative in Cape Town for two decades and did much to promote membership. He studied medicine in South Africa and, after holding various medical positions in Swaziland and London, he became senior lecturer at the University of Cape Town Medical School. He was a delightful person who we will much miss.

There has been a good response to ROSL ARTS's concert grand piano appeal. We have received a donation of £10,000 from a member in India, and generous bequests from Marian Minns and Muriel Durie-Clarke, both of whom died recently. Further donations will be much appreciated.

In June, a meeting of the Discussion Group was combined with a dinner at Over-Seas House, London for the first time. More than 70 members attended the event, which was a resounding success, with an interesting talk from Gen Sir Mike Jackson. The Chairman's lunch, prior to the AGM in May, was also a success, with nearly 100 members in attendance. The speaker was Sir Robert Balchin, Knight Principal of the Imperial Society.

I had an entertaining evening in July, when the finalists of the Caine Prize for African Writing read excerpts from their stories at Over-Seas House. All five finalists were from Commonwealth countries, and the League's support of this competition, founded by Baroness Nicholson, widow of Sir Michael Caine, is very worthwhile. See page 32 for a short report.

Robert Newell



Editor's letter

Our Focus articles ensure that every Commonwealth country gets at least some coverage in *Overseas*, but we still have some countries left to tackle. Because of their size, location and geography, it is difficult to find writers for nations such as Grenada, Kiribati and Nauru, but another country has been somewhat neglected by the journal, and for very different reasons. Northern Ireland has not featured in the 'In the UK' section, yet because it is part of the United Kingdom, it has never before been considered for the Focus.

In the national media, coverage of the 10-year anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement was disappointing. Most gave little more than a brief overview of the Troubles, Agreement and new Assembly. Few touched on the issues facing Northern Ireland today, such as the booming tourism industry (page 8) and the housing slump, which has affected Belfast particularly badly because of the dramatic 'boom' that preceded it. The Troubles still touch on every aspect of life in the country, and it was important to include an analysis of the current political situation (page 10), but we also look at the Ulster Irish dialect, which was created by political prisoners in the Maze, and the subsequent rise of Ulster-Scots (page 12).

Looking ahead, I would like to run a Focus on Rwanda next year, when there is every hope that it will join the Commonwealth. I am pleased that League member Ian Richards ignored the warnings of friends and colleagues, and went there on holiday. On page 7, he gives a personal account of his time in the small African nation.

The new Commonwealth Secretary General Kamalesh Sharma explains his priorities for the organisation on page 5, and his vision for the future is truly inspirational. Another inspiration for me, is Open House weekend, which is held every September. I always have trouble choosing which of the 650 buildings to see. Thanks to Samantha Whitaker's article on page 28 – her first full-length feature for the journal – Container City is now top of my list.

Miranda Moore

HAPPY MEETING: The director-general with the former South African High Commissioner Kent Durr and his wife Suzy at Over-Seas House

COMMONWEALTH NEWS

The way forward

As he takes office as Secretary General, **Kamalesh Sharma** outlines his vision for the Commonwealth

When I am asked about my priorities for taking the Commonwealth forward, I try to reduce a complex and ambitious endeavour to the three issues of globalism, governance and growth, especially advancement for women and young people. 'Globalism' is different from 'globalisation': it is an actively pursued mindset, which sees the world as one, and forges collective responses in shared situations. As almost no other international organisation, the Commonwealth is uniquely placed to do that. Simply put, I want to enhance our status as enlightened and engaged actors on the world stage. To do so, we will need to bring maximum leverage to small budgets, and use the potential of our networks and our partners – existing and new – to extend our reach and influence.

Governance is one of many Commonwealth strengths; marketeers might even call it a Commonwealth brand. It is one of the most defining things we offer our member states: from the principles of governance to the organisational structures with which to put them into practice, and the trained staff to do so. It is both the oil and the machinery of democracy, and I want to see it developed further.

Growth opportunities for women and young people are at the core of development. It is young people, of course, for whom we are helping our member countries develop, while the status and fortunes of women are probably the most telling indicators as to how well we are doing it. The two are combined in the girl-child: her future is ours.

The Commonwealth, traditionally throughout its history, has been punching way above its financial weight. It is a very remarkable organisation. Firstly, many of its civil society components, such as journalists and parliamentarians, were already in existence long before the organisation itself came into existence. It is the first organisation of that nature. Secondly, it is the only organisation that stepped from one political world and historical era into another – consciously to redefine itself. And it has not avoided the challenges of its times. In the time of the independence of African states, the Commonwealth was the one organisation that grappled with the issues of decolonisation and apartheid. After the Cold War was over, we were very quick in the 1990s to move towards looking at ourselves as a totality, with all the actors moving together in concert with a shared vision, whether in civil society, business or government.

The advantage of the Commonwealth is that it doesn't say in its title what it does. This was perceived for a long time to be the result of not enough being known about it. No such problem with, for example, the International Monetary Fund, World Health Organization and International Labour Organization. The Commonwealth means a kind of a culture of living together and co-existing, and defining what this means as you go along. Which is why it is an eternally morphing organisation.



GREAT AMBITION: HE Kamalesh Sharma (2nd from right), with (l-r) Miss Sarah Gillett (Vice-Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps), Mr Stanley Martin (ROSL Chairman), Mrs Sharma and Mrs Martin, at the Central Council lunch in May, where he was guest of honour

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Overseas

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Emerging from tragedy

Rwanda might seem an unlikely holiday destination, but from gorilla tracking to lakeside resorts, it has a lot to offer the adventurous traveller, says **Ian Richards**



When I tell friends and colleagues that I am going on holiday to Rwanda, nearly all of them look at me askance, as though they have either misheard or begun to consider my sanity. However, it takes just 10 days travelling around this fascinating, fertile and friendly country to prove what I have always known: that they are wrong to doubt my decision.

Sadly, most people – even my colleagues, who have considerable international experience – associate Rwanda with one thing: genocide. The assumption is that it is a dangerous, unstable place that is best avoided; certainly not a holiday destination. But the tragic event that has blighted the perception of the small landlocked country took place 14 years ago. Rwanda has come a long way since then.

Nevertheless, no visitor can make any sense of the country or its people without trying to understand the genocide, and an obvious place to start is the Kigali Memorial Centre. Situated on one of the hills over which the city is spread, it is a surprising place. Like much that I see in Rwanda, it is dignified and understated. It attempts to explain the history of the national tragedy, but also to set it in the context of other genocides around the world in order to suggest how such tragedies can be avoided.

Undoubtedly, the most lasting of the museum's images comes from the section upstairs, which focuses on the child victims of the massacre. How could anyone fail to be moved by the photograph of David Mugiraneza – with his haunting eyes, gentle expression and hand partially raised to cover his mouth – who liked football and wanted to be a doctor, and

who was tortured to death in 1994, aged 10. While I am there, a group of locals arrive. They each lay a single flower on one of the stone slabs that mark the mass graves. There can be no Rwandan who was alive at that time who was not personally touched by the tragedy. A few talk about their experiences when pressed; most simply want to move on.

My first impressions of Kigali are of a relaxed and relatively ordered city, with none of the stress, chaos and humidity that await travellers in other African capitals. But there is little to hold

Being face to face with our closest relatives in the animal kingdom is an undeniable thrill

the visitor for long, apart from numerous craft shops, most featuring similar products, and some good food. It is beyond Kigali that the real attraction lies. The country's most famous attraction is its primates. In the north, you can see mountain gorillas and golden monkeys at Volcanoes National Park, which stretches over the border into the DR Congo and Uganda; in the southwest, there are chimpanzees and other species of monkey at Nyungwe National Park, which borders Burundi. Visiting them involves signing up (well in advance in high season) for a one-day trek led by a park warden, which leaves at 7am and entails a bush walk of unpredictable

duration and difficulty. There is an element of the package tour to all this, particularly to the gorilla tracking. The wardens are generally English students rather than zoologists, and there is a hefty price tag associated with each activity, so you can easily rack up a bill of US\$1,000 per person in just three or four days. However, being face to face with our closest relatives in the animal kingdom is an undeniable thrill.

Both national parks can be reached by public transport from Kigali within half a day, and there are some spectacular views en route. There is also good quality accommodation in or near the parks, offering evening meals that can be prebooked. It is worth splashing out on lunch at one of the top-end lodges in Volcanoes. You may even get to meet some of the fascinating expats who are working on environmental projects in the area, such as Simon, who runs an orphanage for mountain gorillas in the foothills of the park.

Before returning to Kigali, I take a side-trip to nearby Gisenyi, a beautiful resort on the shores of Lake Kivu, where surprisingly high-quality accommodation is available, including a four-star hotel that is developing watersports facilities. While I am there, I take a short drive over the border to Goma in DR Congo, which is almost a twin city of Gisenyi as far as the map is concerned, but provides quite a contrast. Goma is full of the poverty, chaos and UN machinery that typifies a region riven with ethnic division. It makes me appreciate fully just how much Rwanda has achieved.

Ian Richards is a League member and keen traveller. He has worked with the Commission for Africa and currently lives in Holland.

FOCUS

City on the rise

Ten years ago, no one would have picked Belfast as a holiday destination. Now it attracts 7 million visitors a year and has turned its troubled past into a major tourist attraction, says **Tim Hedgley**



For years, the capital of Northern Ireland has been famed for one thing: the Troubles. But now Belfast is a very different place. In a few short years, it has been transformed into a beautiful part of Europe that attracts in excess of 6.5 million visitors a year, making it the second favourite UK city to visit. Vehicle checkpoints, bulletproof police vehicles and heavily-armed officers have been replaced with tourists, and only a few police officers on bicycles giving directions.

As the two diametrically opposed communities slowly come together, the tourism industry is reaping the benefits. Many large hotel chains have jumped at the opportunity to tap into the country's vibrant tourism market, leading to a dramatic upturn in visitor numbers. Malone Lodge Hotel, Apartments and Suites, one of the few hotels in Belfast that have been trading for

20 years or more, is now one of the city's finest boutique hotels, situated in the peaceful and leafy Queen's Quarter of South Belfast. According to its owner, Gareth Macklin: "Belfast's regeneration has been fantastic. We have been serving the community for quite some time and we were only one of a very small group of local hoteliers who kept things going through the bad times. The hotel has seen a significant increase in revenue and occupancy over the last

In 2007 Belfast was voted second favourite UK city and won the UK City of the Future title

competition run by *fDi Magazine*; and it is listed as a "city on the rise" on Lonely Planet's *Blue List* 2007. Tours range from a champagne tour in a Rolls Royce with a former police officer, who will take you to the birthplace of C S Lewis and the lion door knocker that inspired *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, to a black cab ride with a reformed prisoner, who will take you to the once no-go areas of the Shankill and Falls Road to visit the scenes of notorious bombings and shootings. Many visitors want to see the old trouble spots that were formerly frequented only by the police, the Army and terrorists.

However, this past does create a problem for the future of tourism in Northern Ireland. Coiste na nIarchimi, an umbrella organisation of groups supporting Republican prisoners, organises tours of the former Maze Prison, and political tours of North and West Belfast. Its aim is 'to secure the full integration of the Republican former prisoner community through recognition of the contribution they have made to the community in the past and can make in the future'. This statement alone causes deep upset among many sections of Northern Irish society. Another tour company that has angered Loyalists – the 'Paddy Wagon' – which is considered by some to be 'too Irish' in its design, has recently been the victim of two bomb attacks.

Belfast certainly has a lot of work to do before it can pip Barcelona to the position of most visited city in Europe. But it has also come a long way. The number of visitors last year reached an all-time high of 6.9 million, according to the latest figures released by the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau (BVCB). This brought an estimated £313.3 million to the local

few years. With the threat of constant bombings now a distant memory, people are swarming to see this once derelict city."

The most obvious sign for local people of Belfast's regeneration is the open-top city tour buses. The city's 40 landmark buildings, many of which represent a bygone era of industrial growth, are central to its cultural renaissance. Tourists are taken to 300-year-old pubs, the Parliament Buildings at Stormont and 'Sampson and Goliath' – the cranes at Harland and Wolff building dock – which are now protected.

Belfast was voted second favourite UK city in the Guardian, Observer and Guardian Unlimited Travel Awards 2007; it beat 20 other UK cities to win the title of UK City of the Future in a





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TOP ATTRACTIONS: The 'peace lines' that separate Catholic and Protestant neighbourhoods (left) now feature on many sightseeing tours (far left). Many of these barriers, erected with the aim of minimising sectarian violence, have been painted with murals. This one depicts some of Belfast's most popular sights, including (l-r) the Albert Memorial Clock, Stormont, the 'Sampson and Goliath' cranes and the 'Big Fish' sculpture at Donegal Quay

economy. There is great expectation that visitor numbers will continue to rise, especially since Belfast relaunched itself in June. "Belfast's moment is here and now, and its people are key to its success," said the Lord Mayor of Belfast, Cllr Tom Hartley, at the event. He added that the opportunity must be grasped to ensure Belfast "becomes a world-class city in which to live, work, invest and visit".

The new brand is spearheaded by a heart-

*A reformed prisoner
will take you to the once
no-go areas and scenes
of notorious bombings*

shaped 'B' logo, using phrases such as 'B welcome' and 'B part of it'. Its aim is to help market Belfast to international visitors and potential investors, promoting the city as an exciting, vibrant and welcoming place. The Lord Mayor said: "Just a couple of weeks ago, the most powerful man in the world visited a small number of major European cities ahead of standing down as US President. One of the cities George Bush chose to visit was Belfast – and that speaks volumes as to how far our city has come in recent years."

Tim Hedgley is a travel journalist with the Derry Journal Group. He has worked for the Daily Mirror and the Belfast Telegraph.

ROSL'S NORTHERN IRELAND HEYDAY

Early editions of *Overseas* report that League members in Ulster, led by P Cowan and Stanley Yeates, were beginning to meet and extend membership by inviting their friends and relatives to join. The Northern Ireland Branch was officially formed in 1926, with the Right Hon H M Pollock, Minister of Finance in the Government of Northern Ireland, as president; and P Cowan of Rathcavan, Ballymena, as secretary. The branch met at the Carlton Cafe in Donegall Place, Belfast until it eventually opened its own clubhouse in Wellington Place (pictured), in the heart of Belfast. The journal reported that Ulster members were 'determined to prove to the world at large that Ulster is very much on the map as far as the British Empire is concerned'. In the late 1950s, the future of the branch hung in the balance and the clubhouse was showing signs of deterioration, but in 1960 it was 'completely reconstructed and modernized'. The journal goes on: 'Members enjoy a regular monthly programme of events, including lectures, film shows, luncheons and cocktail parties.'



The branch continued to operate during the Troubles. In February 1973, a car-bomb explosion shattered every window at the rear of the premises, but thankfully there were no casualties and the branch returned to business within days. However, the level of social activity in the city centre was in such decline that the branch was experiencing a financial loss, and Central Council took the decision not to renew the lease on the clubhouse when it expired in 1974. It was hoped that the branch would continue to meet at an alternative venue, and a committee member even offered to provide overnight accommodation for League members visiting the area.

FOCUS

The next 10 years

Can the main political players at Stormont move on from the old politics of peace-processing and find a true democratic balance, asks **Malachi O'Doherty**



The picture of Ian Paisley of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) sitting with Sinn Féin's Gerry Adams in 2007 is one of the iconic images of modern peacemaking. Paisley was the most vocal and truculent representative of unionism. Although he had only recently become the leader of the protestant majority, he had for years been the only unionist who would have been recognised outside Ireland. The world perceived him to be a thundering pastor of narrow views and a roaring temper. Adams had started his journey to compromise earlier. He had moved from being a fanatical Republican leader who endorsed an IRA bombing campaign to being a conciliator who was welcome in Downing Street.

So long and convoluted was the journey to bring the two men and their followers into partnership, that it was inevitable that people would see that achievement as the completion of a deal rather than the commencement of a difficult and tetchy relationship. Neither man would play a significant role in day-to-day politics. By 2007, when the new Assembly returned following its suspension in 2004, Paisley was in his 80s. He functioned more as a figurehead as First Minister, before standing down in April and letting his party deputy, Peter Robinson, take power. Robinson is a cold tactician.

Adams had declined to take office and delegated the Deputy First Minister's job to his own party deputy, Martin McGuinness. And

something happened that no one had anticipated. Paisley and McGuinness came to love each other. They became a double act, nicknamed the Chuckle Brothers, because everywhere they went they were seen laughing together. Much of the media speculation had asked if these two longtime enemies would shake hands; no one had anticipated that they would go far beyond formal civility.

Now that Paisley has gone and the chuckling has stopped, it is becoming more clear that the practical working relationship between Sinn Féin and the DUP is a difficult one – so difficult that the future of this political marriage of convenience cannot be confidently relied on. Currently, the parties are deadlocked on several issues. Sinn Féin wants to end academic selection for 11-year-olds. The DUP wants to keep selection. Sinn Féin wants an Irish language act that would make Gaelic an official language of the state. The DUP says no. Sinn Féin and other parties want the old Maze Prison site, which housed the paramilitaries, to be the location of a new multisport stadium. The DUP is unhappy with the idea, partly because it includes plans for a museum of the conflict, which they think would glorify the IRA.

For partners committed to governing together, Sinn Féin and the DUP appear to be doing more stalling than cooperating. They seem to be better at the gesture politics that counted so much during the peace process, or the oppositional politics that served them so well when they were minority parties. They still serve constituencies that retain a suspicion and



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A UNITED FRONT: History is made in 2007 as then Democratic Unionist Party leader Ian Paisley (left) and Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams (right) sit together at Stormont for the first time in history, while facing the media to announce plans to form a power-sharing administration. A statue of Edward Carson, the founding father of Irish unionism, can be seen in the foreground of Stormont (opposite), the seat of the Northern Ireland Assembly

contempt for each other, and perhaps feel this has to be reflected in their political strategies.

So just how stable is the political arrangement? The most worrying moment was during the handover from Paisley to Robinson. The constitution of the Northern Ireland Parliament, enshrined in the Good Friday Agreement and modified in the St Andrews Agreement, stipulates that the First and Deputy First Ministers must come from each side of the community divide and must be endorsed by both sides. The DUP was unable, therefore, to change the person in the top job without Sinn

Some feel that Northern Ireland is back to where it was at the start of the Troubles

Féin's approval. Sinn Féin briefed the media that it would not support Robinson's appointment without an assurance of progress towards an Irish language Act. Adams rushed to London for high-pressure talks with the Prime Minister Gordon Brown, and suddenly it looked as if we were back in the old mores of peace processing, whereby parties sought to outflank each other rather than cooperate. And the problem was resolved by the old peace process method of prolonging the stalemate but deferring the crisis.

The parties have agreed to discuss their problems, but not yet to resolve them.

So where does that leave us? Some in Sinn Féin feel that Northern Ireland politics is almost back to where it was at the start of the Troubles, with unionists making the decisions. And the only real change is that Republicans are now at the Cabinet table. They are, however, outvoted there. Others argue that they simply don't yet have the political dexterity to play to their own advantage, and that with a bit more experience and nous they will overcome what is beginning to look like a democratic deficit.

Before the current parliament was established, Robinson predicted that politics would function as a battle a day. Perhaps he was just electioneering, giving his constituents the kind of assurances they enjoy – that peace would be a struggle against Sinn Féin but by other means. It has not been a battle a day, and Robinson has, at times, been as anxious as anyone to cement a serviceable relationship between old foes. And although Adams has been overheard muttering morosely about the prospect of the executive failing, his own deputy, Martin McGuinness, has retained an evident enthusiasm for power-sharing and the stability of the institutions. The question remains whether this strange, unlikely marriage can settle down into amicable cooperation, or if the instincts of both parties to it are irretrievably tetchy.

Malachi O'Doherty is a writer and broadcaster based in Belfast. His books on religion and the Troubles include *Empty Pulpits*.

WORKING WITH THE TROUBLES

During 30 years of unrest, companies in Northern Ireland suffered from adverse media attention and supposed industrial unrest. As owner and managing director of two manufacturing textiles companies in the country, Franklins and Fergusons, I had first-hand experience of this. The workforce, as in any industrial enterprise, consisted of a broad spectrum of employees – including both Catholics and Protestants – who all worked together. No sectarian or discriminatory matters arose and, as we were conscious of the negative views held about Northern Ireland, we were determined that our service, quality and delivery standards would be maintained. We were able to engender a spirit of cooperation, so that the Troubles could not be used as an excuse by customers for not placing orders with us. This company *esprit de corps* stood us in good stead and enabled us to succeed.

Ralph G Bauer, Member of Council

FOCUS

A language of our own

A Gaelic revival started by IRA prisoners in the 1970s has sparked a new interest in Ulster-Scots. **Diarmait Mac Giolla Chríost** asks, has language become the new battleground in Northern Ireland?

The language a person speaks very often defines their sense of who they are, as well as shaping other people's perceptions of their identity.

In Northern Ireland, alternative notions of identity were much contested, often fatally, until the political settlement known as 'The Agreement' in 1998. It is not a coincidence that the languages of the region formed an important part of that agreement. One clause states, for example: 'All participants recognise the importance of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to linguistic diversity, including in Northern Ireland, the Irish language, Ulster-Scots and the languages of the various ethnic communities, all of which are a part of the cultural wealth of the island of Ireland'. Today, armed violence appears to be very much a thing of the past yet cultural identity continues to be an area of struggle. Language, in particular Irish and Ulster-Scots, is a lightning rod for the related unresolved tensions.

Irish was widely believed to have expired as a mother tongue in Northern Ireland during the 1960s. Heinrich Wagner, a professor in Celtic at Queen's University Belfast at the time, remarked upon the 'ruins' of the Irish language on Rathlin Island, off the coast of County Antrim, during the 1950s. In 1951, in the northern Irish-language magazine *An tUlltach* ('The Ulsterman'), a native speaker described the terminal condition of the language in County Tyrone, a place that was once, like Rathlin Island, a heartland. Today, however, the language may be seen and heard on the streets

of Belfast, on the BBC and in the Northern Ireland Assembly.

This revival has two sources. One is the Irish-speaking community that was created on Shaw's Road in West Belfast during the late 1960s. This linguistic phenomenon was the initiative of a small group of families who were determined to found an urban Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking area) by setting up Irish-speaking homes together in the close-knit proximity of Shaw's Road. Despite official opprobrium, this community succeeded in establishing the first

During the blanket protest, Irish became the language of resistance

Bunscoil, or Irish-medium primary school, in the city in 1971.

In 2006, according to Seán Mac Corraigh in the book *Belfast and the Irish Language*, there were 65 Irish-medium nursery units and schools throughout Northern Ireland, providing education for more than 3,000 children. While the influence of the traditional Ulster Irish dialect, as spoken in the Gaeltacht of Donegal in the Republic of Ireland, is strong, their language is not that of standard Irish. Gabrielle Maguire, in her book *Our Own Language*,

provides some good examples of the speech of these young people: *ní labhair mise* instead of the standard Irish *níor labhair mise* ('I did not speak'); *le an...* rather than *leis an...* ('with the...'); and *rachann sé* not *téann sé* ('he goes').

A second source of the revival is the Maze. This prison, known as 'Long Kesh' by Irish Republicans, was the birthplace of another Irish-language community. Here, between the early 1970s and the mid-1990s, Irish Republican prisoners developed an argot form of the Irish language as a means of communicating among themselves to the exclusion of the prison warders and non-Irish Republican prisoners. They described the language they developed as 'Jaillic', a play on the word 'Gaelic', and coined the term 'Jailtacht', from the word 'Gaeltacht', to describe their peculiar linguistic community.

In 1973, the prisoners designated a small part of the prison as an Irish-speaking Gaeltacht hut. Such a development in itself is not remarkable. But in 1976, Irish Republicans lost their status as Special Category prisoners, leading to the 'blanket protest' (a refusal to wear prison uniform), the 'dirty protest' (a refusal to slop-out cells) and the hunger strike. This, along with the relocation of prisoners to the newly built H-Blocks, brought the language to the forefront of the Republican struggle inside prison.

"The key turning point for Irish was the removal of political status," says former prisoner Séanna Walsh, who now directs Sinn Féin's Department for Culture. "During the blanket protest, the Irish language became the language of resistance. Irish was necessary for



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CELEBRATING GAELIC: The 'Cúpla Focal' Connolly twins, Kaya and Keava, aged 6, launch the St Patrick's Day festival Lá 'Le Gaeilge in association with Foras Na Gaeilge, the body responsible for promoting the Irish language throughout the island of Ireland since 1999

survival. At that time, there were four or five who were very good at Irish and they taught the language to the others. This started with the learning of key phrases. These would be shouted through the doors of the cells or scratched onto the walls with religious medals."

According to one former prisoner, the language was also "a means of politicising the non-political prisoners". In the mid-1980s, Walsh arranged for an intensive six-week Irish course to be developed. "The use of the Irish language in the prison at this time was different. It was used all the time, in the communal areas and in individual cells. You would even dream in Irish," he says. "Around 300 of the 400 Republican prisoners became fluent." After the IRA ceasefire of 1994, the prison regime relaxed and the prisoners created two wholly Irish-speaking wings in the H-Blocks.

The intensive use of Irish under the constraints of the prison regime gave rise to a formulaic version of the language, which had a significant impact on the development of Irish in Northern Ireland and particularly in Belfast. Some of their formulaic phrases and faulty idioms, including their slogan *Tiocfaidh ár lá* ('Our day will come'), directly penetrated the popular culture.

Thus, Belfast has become a confluence for different forms of Irish and, in a certain sense, has discovered its own unique expression of the language. The hip-hop poetry of Gearóid Mac Lochlainn is wholly characteristic of this. Fellow poet Nuala Ní Dhomhaill describes his language as "Gaeilge as she is spoken in Béal

Feirste [Belfast], including intrusions from English – the dreaded *Béarlachas* [Irish excessively influenced by English], sometimes to the point of pidgin and leavened at all times with a fair smattering of *Jailtacht* argot. All in all, it is sensational proof, if proof were needed, that Irish is alive and kicking and living in Belfast."

Gabrielle Maguire's description of the Irish of Belfast as "our own language" points to a sense of ownership that is political (Irish nationalist/Republican), geographical (northern/urban) and linguistic (non-standard yet authentic). Today, visitors to Belfast are encouraged by the City Council to spend time in the Gaeltacht Quarter, established in the west of the city in 2006. The presentation of this area as a tourist attraction – a project in which many Irish Republican ex-prisoners are directly involved – shows that the epic tale of the Irish language is being cast anew for a broad audience. It is a story that intends to reconnect a people and a language.

It is not surprising, perhaps, given the nature of politics in Northern Ireland, that the revival of the Irish language has been countered by the emergence of renewed political interest on the part of Unionists in Ulster-Scots. Whether Ulster-Scots is actually a language or not is a matter of considerable debate. Some argue that it is a dialect of English. The linguist John Kirk questions its status as a language and suggests that much of the new vocabulary developed by the proponents of Ulster-Scots is entirely spurious. The broadly unionist newspaper *Belfast*

Telegraph carried, for example, an advertisement for *Unner-Editor (Inglis an Ulster-Scotch) fur tha Chammer o tha Scriverit Accoont (Hansard)* or 'Sub-editor (English and Ulster-Scots) in the Office of the Official Report (Hansard)' of the new Northern Ireland Assembly, following the Good Friday Agreement. This reportedly led Kirk to remark that no one 'speaks the language of the job advert or the council leaflet because many of the expressions have never existed in the traditional dialect'.

More recently, the nationalist newspaper *The Irish News* pointed out that elements of Ulster-Scots derive from the Irish language. The paper exhorted the democratic unionist Edwin Poots, who was then the minister in the Assembly with responsibility for both Irish and Ulster-Scots, to *Houl yer wheist!* or 'Hold on, listen up!' The paper wryly noted that this familiar Ulster-Scots phrase is related to the Irish verb *éist* meaning 'to listen'.

Perhaps these two small words capture the essence of the problem. How might two peoples, who share a small corner of Ireland, who know each other's geography, history and culture intimately, and yet are profoundly divided by that knowledge, come to understand each other? How might they come to speak the same language, one might say, while at the same time allowing the full spate of that stream of tongues?

Diarmait Mac Giolla Chríost is a senior lecturer in Cardiff University's School of Welsh. His books include *Language and the City*.

Grog's notebook

News from the London clubhouse



▲ **SWITZERLAND BRANCH:** League members from Switzerland with friends enjoy a pre-lunch aperitif in the garden after the Order of the British Empire service in St Paul's



◀ **CHAIRMAN'S LUNCH:** Members relax in the garden at Over-Seas House after lunch with guest speaker Sir Robert Balchin, Knight Principal of the Imperial Society of Knights Bachelor

▶ **CENTRAL COUNCIL:** New members of Central Council, (l-r) Sir Roger Carrick, Dr Edmund Marshall, Mrs Patricia Farrant and Nik Raof Daud at the Council's lunch in May



▲ **KING'S CROSS:** Good walking legs were needed when ROSL members explored regeneration projects in the St Pancras area and the newly renovated railway station, which has the longest champagne bar in Europe and the splendid 9-metre high, 20-tonne statue called 'The Meeting Place'



Champagne prize

This painting by Denys G Wells VPRBA BEM (1881–1973) was acquired by the director-general at an auction in Newbury earlier this year, along with four other paintings that together formed one lot. Member David Starkie had tipped Mr Newell off that one of the works was of Over-Seas House, London, so he bid by phone and obtained all five for £180. A painting of Suffolk Place was bought by the Notre Dame University, whose building was pictured. This purchase covered the League's cost. The painting pictured was described as being of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, but we have been assured that it is not. A bottle of champagne will go to whoever can correctly identify the building.



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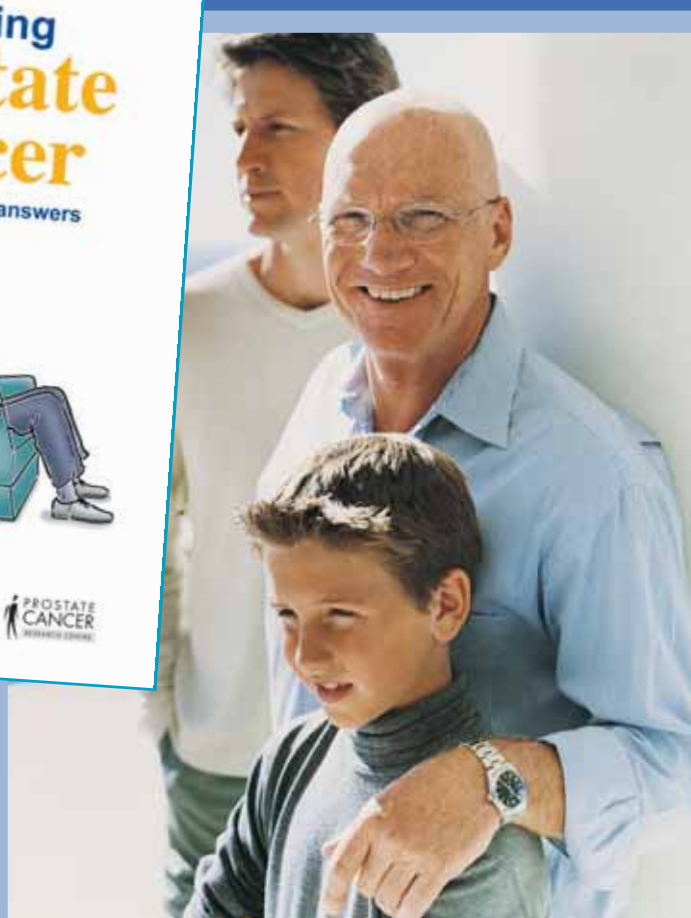
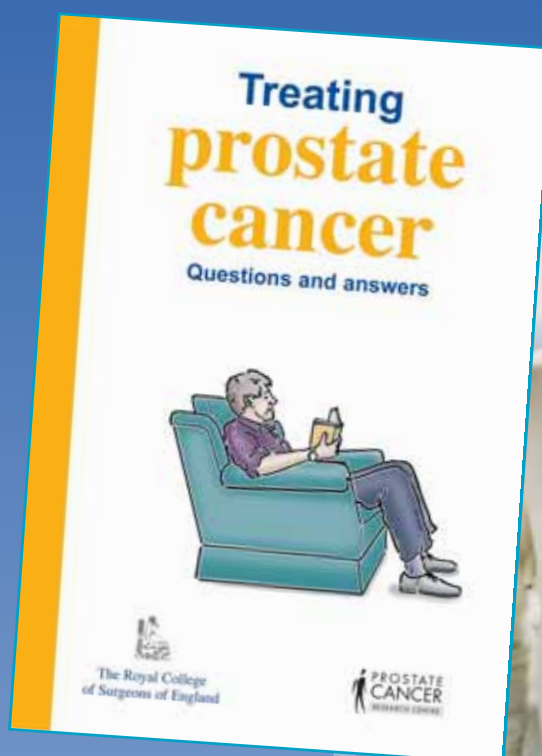
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A winning formula

They might not have won the Inter-Club Quiz, but the younger members' programme is going from strength to strength, reports **Alexandra Debarge**

April

April saw the third sell-out event of the Inter-Club calendar. There was a sparkling-wine reception at the Farmers Club, followed by a delicious feast, to celebrate the best of British produce. Layered fish terrine preceded roast stuffed saddle of Elwy Valley lamb, served with black pudding, button onions, lardons of bacon and a minted kidney sauce. Pear and raspberry mousse with Pear William sorbet, followed by a selection of fine English cheeses, concluded the luscious spread on what proved to be a very successful and enjoyable evening.

May

The tutored Pommery Champagne Tasting hosted by the Carlton Club, which sold out in less than 48 hours, provided a fantastic opportunity for members to socialise while improving their knowledge of champagne. The Pommery champagnes, which were accompanied by smoked fish and strawberries

with cream, included Brut Royal, Springtime Brut Rosé, Summertime Blanc de Blancs, Wintertime Blanc de Noirs and 1995 vintages. To purchase any of the champagnes from the evening, please use the order form on the Inter-Club website (www.inter-club.co.uk).

June

The Inter-Club Quiz brought all the clubs together to battle it out for the title of wisest and most knowledgeable club. Last year's winner, the Savage Club, had the privilege of hosting this year's event and provided a delicious three-course dinner. The competition was fierce, with rounds of questions inspired by the various genres that make up the Savage Club's membership, including law, literature and art, and a music round featuring live excerpts played by the Brother Savages. Tension mounted, but once again, the Savages managed to win and, as tradition has it, that means they will be hosting the quiz again next year.



SPRING EVENTS: Younger members indulge in an evening of champagne tasting (above), and test their grey matter in the Inter-Club Quiz (below)

Pictures: James Scott

Forthcoming events

Saturday 20 September

Overseas Lunch, Paris

Friday 10 October

Ceilidh, Caledonian Club

November (date tbc)

James Bond Drinks Party and *Quantum of Solace* preview, Oxford and Cambridge Club

Wednesday 17 December

Christmas Ball, Royal Automobile Club

For more information on events, visit www.inter-club.co.uk. To join ROSL's young member network, email richard.white@axicom.com.





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ROSL 56th Annual Music Competition

Eoghan O'Neill offers a ROSL ARTS perspective on his third competition

New Year inevitably means bedlam in the ROSL ARTS office, as our minds turn to the 200 young musicians hoping to follow in the footsteps of Jacqueline du Pré, Piers Lane and Jonathan Lemalu by winning the ROSL Annual Music Competition. The bulk of the applications come in at 5pm on deadline day. We spend many hours sifting through them, making calls to explain that Japan is not in the Commonwealth and that 32 is not under the age limit of 30. In February, the competition kicks off and we see a constant stream of musicians passing through the building, amusing staff and members alike with ear-splitting brass renditions in the green room, last-minute discussions about tempi, anxious calls to missing accompanists and, in the case of the singers, lengthy lipstick sessions!

The first section of the 2008 competition was wind. In an unprecedented turn, all four finalists were flautists. We heard everything from Poulenc

to a jazz fusion piece. Laura Lucas was the winner, giving a vigorous performance of Chaminade's *Flute Concertino*, which she followed with a slow movement from Telemann's *Sonata No 3* – a lovely touch. British tenor Adrian Ward prevailed in the singers section, New Zealand cellist Victoria Simonsen won a close strings final, and the set of solo prizewinners was completed by Australian pianist Michael Ierace.

This year, there were a record number of non-UK entries – very encouraging for a competition that prides itself on supporting overseas musicians as much as possible. An unprecedented 11 musicians from overseas reached their section finals and were invited to compete in the Overseas Awards evening at Over-Seas House. They included pianist Ivan Kiwuwa, who became the first Ugandan prizewinner, and South African soprano Sarah-Jane Brandon, winner of the Lorna Viol

Memorial Prize for the most outstanding musician from overseas.

The evening of Monday 19 May was warm and clear at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London for the 56th ROSL Annual Music Competition Final. This is the flagship event of the ROSL ARTS calendar and is always a great advertisement for the support the League provides to young musicians. The distinguished panel of judges was chaired for the first time by Gavin Henderson CBE, former principal of Trinity College of Music.

Laura Lucas began the evening and chose an ambitious programme. Her performance was captivating from the outset. Daring to start with an unaccompanied piece, Debussy's enigmatic *Syrinx*, she went on to play Georges Hue's *Fantasie* and a theatrical performance of *Voice* by the leader of the Japanese avant-garde, Tōru Takemitsu. The Takemitsu pushed the instrument to its technical limits, and at the same time allowed Laura to demonstrate her inherent musicality. As in the section final, she finished with the spellbinding Telemann slow movement.

Tenor Adrian Ward sang *Where E'er You Walk* from Handel's *Semele* and two Fauré songs from *La Bonne Chanson* before delighting the audience with *Come to Me in my Dreams* by Frank Bridge. This work, which always evokes great English tenors of yore, is perfectly suited to his voice and stage presence. He finished with a deftly characterised *Abschied* by Hugo Wolf.

String players have the benefit of a huge repertoire of great works to choose from, and cellist Victoria Simonsen took full advantage. Starting with the *Largo* from Boccherini's *Sonata No 5*, she then played Schumann's romantic *Adagio in Ab* and finally launched into Debussy's *Cello Sonata*. This is a testing work that explores the full range of the instrument and a number of timbres and tempi. It is not a piece that really speaks instantly, but Victoria managed to make it engaging from the beginning.



© Richard Smith

TOP MUSICIANS: Laura Lucas is congratulated by Lord Luce (left) and Gavin Henderson (right) on winning the Gold Medal and First Prize. The solo competitors with prizegiver Lord Luce in the interval (opposite, l-r): Adrian Ward, Laura Lucas, Lord Luce, Victoria Simonsen, Michael Ierace

Michael Ierace looked nervous as he came on stage, but any anxiety he may have had was unfounded, as he showed expert touch and accuracy, and made every note count in a stylish performance of Scarlatti's *Sonata K33*. He continued to test himself throughout Schubert's *Impromptu D899* and Chopin's *Scherzo Op 39*.

As ever, the second half of the concert was devoted to showcasing the winners of the ensemble prizes while the jury deliberated. The Brodowski String Quartet played the first movement of Mendelssohn's *Op 80 Quartet*, and wind quintet the Camarilla Ensemble performed music by Carl Nielsen and J B McEwen.

As he had done at every section final, the chairman of judges, Gavin Henderson, took time to remember Evelyn Barbirolli, who passed away shortly before the competition began, before announcing the result. Lady Barbirolli had a long and close association with the competition and the League, and the final was dedicated to her memory. The chairman then announced the result: Laura Lucas became the third flautist to win the competition in its 56-year history – a clear decision and one that was well received by the audience. Her dominant stage presence and ambitious programme impressed the judges,



© Richard Smith

while her natural virtuosity, musicality and flamboyance will surely secure her a successful career. The prizes were presented by the League President, Lord Luce, a fitting prizegiver as a former Arts Minister. Audience, performers and judges were then serenaded by the Brodowski Quartet, with the *Allegretto pizzicato* from Bartók's *Fourth String Quartet*.

The ROSL Annual Music Competition prides itself on being a starting point rather than an endpoint, and we look forward to working with and supporting all of our prizewinners in the months to come – in concerts and projects at the League's clubhouses in London and Edinburgh, and throughout the UK and beyond.

Main awards

Gold Medal, First Prize (£5,000) Laura Lucas, flute

Coutts & Co Award for Keyboard (£2,500) Michael Ierace, piano (Australia)

ROSL Award for Singers in memory of Pamela Faulkner (£2,500) Adrian Ward, baritone

ROSL Award for Strings (£2,500) Victoria Simonsen, cello (New Zealand)

Worshipful Company of Dyers Award for Wind (£2,500) Laura Lucas, flute

Parnell Award for Accompanists (£2,500) Joseph Middleton, piano

ROSL Ensemble Prize A and Miller Trophy (£5,000) Brodowski Quartet

ROSL Ensemble Prize B and Miller Trophy (£5,000) Camarilla Ensemble

Overseas awards

Loma Viol Memorial Prize for the most outstanding competitor from overseas (£1,500) Sarah-Jane Brandon, soprano (South Africa)

Audrey Strange Memorial Prize for a singer of promise (£500) Sarah-Jane Brandon, soprano (South Africa)

Philip Crawshaw Memorial Prize for an overseas musician (£500) Ivan Kiwuka, piano (Uganda)

Tait Memorial scholarship for an Australian musician (£500) Melissa Doecke, flute; Michael Ierace, piano

McCallum Prize for a pianist of promise (£500) Jayson Gillham, piano (Australia)

Liszt Society Prize (£500) Jayson Gillham, piano (Australia)

Australian Musical Association Prize for an Australian musician (£500) Andrew Goodwin, tenor

Australian Music Scholarship for an Australian musician (£500) Amir Farid, piano

ROSL Sussex Prize for a woodwind player (£500) Fiona Kelly, flute (Ireland)

Mitchell Award for a New Zealand musician (£500) Kristen Darragh, mezzo soprano

New Zealand Society Prize for a New Zealand musician (£500) Victoria Simonsen, cello

Additional award

Elias Fawcett Award for an outstanding ensemble (£500) Rhodes Trio

Adjudicators for 2008 final

Thanks are hereby extended to the adjudicators of the final of the ROSL 56th Annual Music Competition: Paul Archibald, John Blakely, Teresa Cahill, George Caird, Timothy Dean, Linda Esther Gray, Gavin Henderson CBE (chairman), Carmine Lauri, Nona Liddell MBE, Celia Nicklin, Rodney Slatford OBE, Kathrin Sturrock and Frank Wibaut.

Thanks are also due to those adjudicators who gave their time during the competition's first three stages: Rob Buckland, Nicholas Cox, Chris de Souza, Leslie Howard AM, Simon Lepper, Angela Malsbury and Robert Max.

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A president in the Garter

League President Lord Luce recently became a Knight of the Garter, alongside Prince William and Sir Thomas Dunne. ROSL Chairman **Stanley Martin** reports

Presidents are not normally appointed to the Most Noble Order of the Garter, the highest order of chivalry in the United Kingdom. On the occasion of state visits, they are appointed Knights Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath. Among foreigners, the Garter is reserved for royalty. On 23 April 2008, however, a president was appointed a Knight of the Garter (KG): the President of the Royal Over-Seas League, Lord Luce. So, within a few years, the two top dignitaries of the League (after The Queen) have received this very exclusive order: Princess Alexandra, the Vice-Patron, was so honoured in 2003.

When I wrote about the Princess's appointment ('Who are the Ladies of the Garter?' *Overseas*, Sep-Nov 2003), I described the background to the founding of the order, but it bears repeating briefly. The Garter was founded by Edward III in 1348 and is the oldest continuous national order in Christendom. Its name is usually ascribed to an event at a court ball, when the king retrieved the dropped garter of his mistress, the Countess of Salisbury, and responded to the sniggers of his courtiers with the words, in Norman French: *Honi soit qui mal y pense* ('Shame on him who thinks evil of it'). That has remained the motto of the order and is inscribed in gold on the dark blue velvet garter with which each new knight is invested. Thereafter, on formal occasions, he wears it on his left stockinged calf, while a woman wears it above her left elbow.

Edward III intended the order to reward the young paladins who fought for him in battle and many of the knights over the centuries have been famous warriors: Edward the Black Prince (the first Knight), Marlborough, Wellington, Kitchener, Montgomery, Mountbatten (ROSL President, 1942-79). In recent years, particularly since the Second World War, the order has become more meritocratic and it is no longer as hereditary as it once was. Although it was conferred on every Duke of Rutland from the second to the eighth (from whose widow the League bought Rutland House), the subsequent dukes have not received it. Every prime minister is offered it in due course and, in the 20th century, only four out of 20 declined it.



THE GARTER PROCESSION: (l-r) Lord Luce, Sir Thomas Dunne, Sir John Major and Lady Soames on 23 April 2008

Former Heads of the Diplomatic and Home Civil Services, as well as Chiefs of the Defence Staff, have been appointed KGs and, only a few years ago, the New Zealand mountaineer Sir Edmund Hillary received the honour. Another New Zealander, Lord Elworthy, League Chairman, 1971-76, was made a KG in 1977 but a predecessor, the Marquess of Willingdon (Chairman, 1941), declined the honour on retiring as Viceroy of India; he preferred promotion to marquess because his wife (Chairman, 1941-46) could more obviously share in that honour. Incidentally, he was the last marquess created in this country. Much earlier, Frederick, the 'Grand Old Duke of York' (a KG at the age of seven), died in Rutland House, in what is now the rear bar of the League.

It is usual for Lord Chamberlains to receive the Garter (or, if Scottish, the Thistle) but, in Lord Luce's case, it recognises also a distinguished career, which he recounts in his autobiography

Ring the Changes. He has been colonial district officer and governor, businessman, MP and minister, and university vice-chancellor. Lord Luce is the 999th KG. The 1,000th, by special direction of The Queen, is a future Sovereign of the order: Prince William of Wales. The 1,001st, appointed with them, is Sir Thomas Dunne, Lord-Lieutenant of Herefordshire since 1977.

The home of the order, located within Windsor Castle, is the Chapel of St George, its patron saint; his cross features on its star and mantle. This year, as usual, the new knights were installed at a ceremony at the castle, after which The Queen entertained knights and their wives at lunch, before processing down the hill for the annual service in the chapel. A pleasing aspect of the Garter (like the Thistle and the Order of Merit) is that spouses participate in its gatherings. So Lady Luce, who has supported her husband through his varied career, is able to share this special honour with him.

ROSL WORLD

The latest from the global branches



SUMMER EVENTS: (l-r) Pamela Warrender with the Victoria Branch president Jason Ronald and vice-president Jean Black at their AGM (left); members of the Exeter Branch enjoy their picnic at Fursdon (centre); and Hong Kong Branch patron Anson Chan gives a speech to the branch in May at the China Club (right)

Bournemouth

In May, some members went on a sightseeing trip to Bucklers Hard in the New Forest, followed by a boat trip on the Beaulieu River and tea in the village. In June, the League Chairman, Stanley Martin, and his wife were guests at the annual lunch to celebrate HM The Queen's Official Birthday. Mr Martin gave an interesting talk. Marjorie Harvey, 01202 674857

Cheltenham

At the AGM in May, Mure Smith resigned after eight years as branch chairman. John Miller was elected, along with Barbara Snell, Jean Miller, Ira Newton and Kathleen Northage. In June, a group of 20 had lunch at the Renaissance Restaurant. Kathleen Northage, 01242 515540

Exeter

At the AGM, branch members welcomed former Discussion Group chairman Graham Archer and it was agreed that future meetings would take place at St Olave's Hotel in Mary Arches Street. A raffle at coffee mornings raised £27 for the ROSL Namibia Fund. In July, members enjoyed a picnic at Fursdon. Brian Hawkes, 01395 442017

Hong Kong

At the beginning of the year, the branch held a Middle Eastern-themed dinner at the Official

Residence of the Saudi Consul-General to raise money for a charity helping orphans in Hong Kong and mainland China. A cocktail reception was also held with the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong. In March, the branch celebrated Commonwealth Day with a cocktail reception at the China Club, courtesy of the branch patron, Sir David Tang, who was knighted this year. It was hosted jointly with the Royal Commonwealth Society,

In the spring, members and their guests enjoyed an Indian buffet at a fundraising charity dinner at the Official Residence of the Indian Consul-General, who is a branch patron. A black-tie dinner was later held at the China Club, where branch patron Anson Chan spoke about her distinguished life – from her childhood in Shanghai to her time in Hong Kong, where she rose to become Hong Kong's Chief Secretary. She is now a member of the branch's Legislative Council. A collection was made for the UNICEF appeal for victims of the earthquake in Sichuan. Paul Surtees, president@rosl.org.hk

New Zealand

Many of the New Zealand branches have recently held music recitals: Trio Scintillatum (ROSL Chamber Ensemble winner 2007) performed at the Tauranga Branch; Dame Malvina Major's pupils at the Christchurch Branch; Maurice Till and singer Brigitte Murray at

the South Canterbury Branch; and violinist Alexandra Lomeiko at the Oamaru Branch.

The final of the third Pettman/ROSL ARTS International Chamber Music Ensemble Scholarship will be held at the Academy of Performing Arts at the University of Waikato. Ten ensembles (two from each of the country's universities) will compete for the first prize: an all-expenses-paid five-week tour to the UK. For competition dates, see www.roslnz.org.nz. Lyn Milne, royalo-s@xtra.co.nz

Taunton

At the AGM in April, the chairman, Hazel Lowson, retired after five years in office. Hazel has been indefatigable in her efforts to ensure the success of the branch, which continues to thrive. Her contribution was acknowledged by ROSL Council and the director-general, and her committee added their thanks for her hard work and dedication. Hazel is replaced by Cllr Nigel Stuart-Thorn, who invited the Mayor of Taunton to meet with Hazel and members informally to mark the end of the Jubilee Year. Former Council member and retiring branch deputy chairman, John Carpenter, was appointed, with London approval, as life president of the branch. On a beautiful day in June, 31 members enjoyed picturesque views of the World Heritage Jurassic Coast on a guided coach tour. Sally Roberts, 01823 661148, sar@aldith.org

Victoria

The AGM was addressed by Pamela Warrender following the publication of her autobiography *Pamela – In Her Own Right*. In June, the branch and the Australia-Britain Society held a reception at the Australian Club in Melbourne to bid farewell to Peter West, who had been British Consul-General in Victoria since 2004. Mr West has served in Turkey, Argentina, New Zealand, Denmark, Thailand and Australia, and now heads for Nigeria as the Deputy High Commissioner. His successor, Stewart Gill, will come directly from London.

At Melbourne University's Melba Hall, members and their friends saw the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Society perform Melvyn Morrow's play celebrating the career of George Grossmith, the first G & S patter comedian. The play is set backstage at the Savoy Theatre in 1888, as Grossmith prepares for his last performance. Coral Shrahan, +61 (0)3 9654 8338

West Sussex

In May, a group of branch members attended the Brighton Festival Lunchtime Concert, arranged in association with the Royal Overseas League. It featured cellist Pei-Sian Ng, winner of the ROSL ARTS Music Competition 2007. In June, the branch welcomed League Chairman, Stanley Martin, and his wife as guests of honour at the annual lunch to celebrate HM The Queen's Official Birthday. Several members of the London Group also travelled to Worthing for this special occasion. Marilyn Archbold, 01444 458853

Western Australia

At the AGM in March, the branch chairman gave a talk on his early days as an agricultural supervisor in Northern Rhodesia. The branch is a major participant in the Joint Commonwealth Societies Council and, at HM The Queen's Birthday Dinner in April, the guests of honour were Colonel Michael Page and his wife. A message of loyalty sent to Her Majesty was read to the gathering, together with the acknowledgement from Buckingham Palace.

June saw the finals of the Speech and Leadership contest, in which student entrants are judged on their public speaking and leadership qualities. The topic this year was 'The Strength of the Commonwealth in Climate Change', and the winner was Mike Honniball. Also in June, members enjoyed morning tea and an interesting talk by Colin Porter entitled 'On my Sporting Life'.

Jeff Turner, +61 (0)9381 2600

Vera Valentine (1929–2008)

It was with great sadness that ROSL learnt of the death of Vera Valentine in Winchester on 10 June. Vera supported the ROSL/Namibia project from the start, and funded both bursaries and books. Vivacious, curious and kind, Vera had a real love of life in all its complexity. While she and her husband Donald were living in Nigeria in the 1960s, she became one of the first volunteer prison visitors. Back in the UK, she obtained social work qualifications and set up a lodging scheme for released prisoners.

It was only at her funeral that most people learnt that she had been fighting cancer for two years, as she only admitted to having a bad back. Vera loved parties, ROSL events and the Chairman's Lunch, which she was determined to attend in May and did so. A great spirit to the end.

Margaret Adrian-Vallance

RECIPROCAL CLUBS Royal Automobile Club, Victoria

Formed in 1903, the RACV consists of the five clubs and resorts. The City Club in Melbourne has 112 luxurious rooms, an array of eateries, and an indoor pool and spa. Located on a 67-acre site in the Yarra Valley, the Healsville Club offers similar facilities, plus a golf course and walking trails. The resorts have dining facilities and heated swimming pools. The cabins and caravans at Cobram are surrounded by walking trails, bike tracks and landscaped gardens. Cape Schanck has 52 ocean-view rooms, a golf course, tennis courts and a running track. At Inverloch, there are 26 rooms with views of the picturesque South Gippsland Coast, 20 self-contained villas and 32 powered caravan sites.



Email: clubmembership@racv.com.au; Web: www.racv.com.au

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Tel: +61 (0) 5950 8000

RACV Healsville Country Club, Yarra
Glen Road, Healsville, Victoria 3000 Tel:
+61 (0)3 5962 4899

RACV Cobram Resort, Campbell Road,
Cobram, Victoria 3644
Tel: +61 (0)3 5872 2467

RACV Cape Schanck Resort,
Trent Jones Drive (via Boneo Road),

RACV Inverloch, 70 Cape Paterson-
Inverloch Road, Inverloch, Victoria 3996
Tel: +61 (0)3 5674 0000

The Royal Overseas League has more than 80 reciprocal clubs across the world. Contact the PR department for a complete list, guidelines for usage and a card of introduction, giving at least 10 days notice, or visit www.rosl.org.uk.

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EDINBURGH

The view from Scotland

James Wilkie

Scottish development officer



The 2007–2008 season finished with its customary flourish. Visual arts lunches were held with Deborah Clarke, assistant curator of the Queen's Gallery at the Palace of Holyrood House in May, and with Patrick Elliot, senior curator of the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in June. The League Chairman, Stanley Martin, and his wife Hanni were in Edinburgh for the Scottish AGM, and we were delighted that they could also attend the Queen's Gallery lunch. 2007 was a record year, both for Over-Seas House, Edinburgh and for membership figures.

David Carter FRSE, former chief medical officer for Scotland, gave an outstanding speech to a near-capacity audience at the Scottish Members' Dinner. Students from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music rounded off the social year with a splendid and well-attended Gala Evening of Opera. ROSL ARTS

then presented their annual Edinburgh Festival Fringe programme, which included additional concerts at the Scottish National Gallery. All concerts, as usual, drew large and appreciative audiences over the two-week period.

The Bridge Club and coffee mornings, which both make a substantial contribution to ROSL in Scotland, also completed their respective programmes, and a sizeable party of Scottish members enjoyed the annual visit to the London club early in August.

We now look forward to our 17th season of arts lunches. Highlights include the Chairman's Reception for new members in October and a talk on modern African architecture in November, part of our continuing support of Edinburgh University's Centre of African Studies (see page 30 for the full programme).

West Scotland members should note that this year's Christmas Lunch (12 December) will

ARTS LUNCH: Patrick Elliot, senior curator at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, with a painting by one of the Thai students that is on show at the Landings Gallery

be a special event, with the League Chairman, Stanley Martin, as guest speaker. From 23 November to 21 December, the Edinburgh Clubhouse is offering B&B room rates of £85 for a double or twin room and £65 for a single, Monday to Thursday, for a minimum stay of two nights. This coincides with the Christmas German Market, outdoor ice rink and Edinburgh Festive Season programme, and will allow members to enjoy Christmas shopping in Edinburgh. The clubhouse is ideally located on Princes Street, so you can easily pop back to drop off shopping, rest, grab an extra jumper or have a coffee.

Access all areas

Over-Seas House is now well equipped for members with disabilities, with new walk-in showers and stair lifts

Two bedrooms, one in the Park Wing and the other in the Westminster Wing, have been specially modified to accommodate members with impaired movement. Bedroom and bathroom doors have been widened to allow wheelchair access, and walk-in showers and alarms have been installed. A bedroom at Over-Seas House, Edinburgh is to be modified in the near future to provide similar facilities.

Stair lifts are provided on two staircases, and two stair climbing machines, which

clamp on to wheelchairs and move up and down stairs mechanically, have been bought (one for Over-Seas House, Edinburgh). In the car park, there is a lift for all types of wheelchairs, including heavy motorised ones, to provide access to the Westminster Wing. Three disabled lavatories are available in different parts of the building.

A consultant on accessibility for people with impaired mobility, recommended by the Historic Houses Association, gave advice and approved the facilities provided.



DISCOVERING LONDON

Movement of the people

With the help of an audio guide **Cecilia Thom** finds there is much more to Brixton than meets the eye

For one month every year, the UK celebrates the accomplishments of black people and delves into the history of their communities. Black History Month, which started more than 30 years ago, is held every October. This year's events include a new jazz opera about the 18th-century violinist George Bridgetower, a photography exhibition of life in South Africa, and a range of activities arranged by institutions across the country. I decided to hit the streets of London's most famous Caribbean area for one of several black history walks listed on the BHM website.

Brixton is synonymous with black culture – but what made it so and what was it like before immigrants from the West Indies settled there? To find out I took a walking tour with a difference: instead of joining a group at an allotted time and place, I downloaded Soundmap's audio guide onto my MP3 player, arrived at the first stop in my own time and, with the press of the 'Play' button, was on my way. Narrated by writer and

Brixtonian Alex Wheatle, this hour-long tour doesn't take you far in terms of distance, but you'll go a long way towards weaving together the area's rich history. Let's go back in time...

It's the late 19th century and the streets of middle-class Brixton are walked by the likes of sugar baron and Brixton Library benefactor Sir Henry Tate. This is one of *the* places in the capital to shop. At the corner of Ferndale Road and Brixton Road sits a turreted building – the site of Britain's first department store, Bon Marché, which opened its doors in 1877. Some 11 years later the area's reputation for shopping is still going strong and, around the corner, a glass-canopied thoroughfare has become one of the first in London to benefit from electric lighting – it is, of course, Electric Avenue.

Fast forward to 2008 and shopping is still a big deal here, but these days the once-swish streets are home to a bustling market that's brimming with Caribbean flavour. Speciality foods

such as plantain and ackee are in abundance, and reggae is pumped from stalls and barber shops. We have 1948 to thank for that. On 21 June, 498 men and women from the West Indies made the most of the UK's open-door policy to Commonwealth citizens and arrived on the Empire Windrush to seek their fortune in post-war Britain. Windrush Square pays homage to these first settlers who set an example that led many others to head for the shores of their 'motherland' in the 1950s and 1960s.

With them came their food, their customs and, above all, their music. By the 1970s, Brixton was alive with the sound of reggae and home to several legendary musicians, among them Bob Marley. But it wasn't all good. Drugs became more prolific and the tension between residents and police mounted, coming to a head in riots that erupted on 11 April 1981. Headlines were made, as was a groundbreaking change in the legislation governing the police: no longer could they stop and search individuals without evidence of any wrongdoing. Once again the streets were alive – this time with celebrations.

The riots that set these streets ablaze are long gone, but the culture that residents fought to protect is thriving. And there is still plenty to discover.



© LONDON BOROUGH OF LAMBETH

SHOPPERS' PARADISE: Electric Avenue (above) – so named because it was one of the first streets in London to be illuminated by electric lights – was *the* place to shop in London in the late 19th century. Nowadays Brixton is home to a bustling market where you can get anything from clothing and electrical goods to speciality Caribbean food (top)

Black History Month runs in October but arts and cultural events take place across the UK throughout the year. For more information, visit www.blackhistorymonthuk.co.uk.

Soundmap walking tours, priced £5.99, are available from www.soundmap.co.uk.

MIAOMIAO YU'S LONDON



Where do you live?

Near London Bridge. My neighbours learnt that a developer had applied to build flats on the land beside their house, so they decided to buy it and build two eco houses. Mine was made in Slovenia from wood from a renewable forest, and re-assembled in London in 10 days. Growing up in China, I was taught to value the environment.

What memories do you have of your first trip to London?

I came for the audition for my Masters. I remember the taxi driver pointing out famous landmarks, but I was so preoccupied with the audition that I didn't even look out of the window. Later, I explored London's many museums. I used to live near the British Museum and would often walk through it on my way home. Now I feel like it's *my* museum.

Which has been your favourite performance venue in London?

The small church of St Agnes and St Anne, where I met my fiancé. I played a concert to a small crowd and he came up to speak to me.

Where do you go for a night out?

Going out for me usually involves going to a performance. I recently saw the English National Opera's production of *Candide* at the London Coliseum and am a regular at Sadler's Wells. I often go on my own, half an hour before a performance, and get a last minute ticket. I have seen some amazing dance productions there.



Do you like working in the City?

I have always lived and worked centrally, and I enjoy the City buzz. I don't have a car, so I love the ease of transport in central London, particularly London buses. Wherever possible, I try to travel above ground as it is so much nicer than being stuck in a hot and smelly Tube.



© iSTOCKPHOTO.COM/S. GREG PANOSIAN

TOP TREATS: The view from the Millennium Bridge to St Paul's (above). 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' at Shakespeare's Globe (left)

What do you miss most when you are away?

The Thames and its bridges. My favourite is the Millennium Bridge, especially at night with St Paul's lit up behind. I like to walk along the river, past Hay's Galleria, HMS Belfast, City Hall and Tower Bridge, to Butler's Wharf. The things I see represent so many parts of London.

What would be your ideal day out?

I would eat wild boar sausage and brownies at Borough market, have a cappuccino at Monmouth Coffee, and wander along the river to The Globe. I would stand in the pit, just like the commoners did in Shakespearean times.

Concert pianist Miaomiao Yu (www.miaomiaoyu.com) won the ROSL ARTS Society of Women Musicians Award in 2006. Since 2007, she has been a professor of piano at Guildhall School of Music and Drama.
Interview by Samantha Whitaker.

LONDON

What's on...

Jazz Festival

Southbank Centre

Friday 14–Sunday 23 November

Fully titled 'Jazz Festival in association with BBC Radio 3', the UK's largest annual celebration of jazz features a wide range of performers and an extensive Jazz for Free programme.

Tickets: various. **Contact:** 0871 663 2500 or www.southbankcentre.co.uk

The Turner Prize Exhibition

Tate Britain

Tuesday 30 September–Sunday 18 January 2009

Exhibition showcasing work by Runa Islam, Mark Leckey, Goshka Macuga and Cathy Wilkes – the four artists short-listed for the Turner prize, one of Europe's most prestigious visual arts awards.

Tickets: £7. **Contact:** 020 7887 8888 or www.tate.org.uk



© BILL COOPER

Matthew Bourne's Edward Scissorhands

Sadler's Wells

Tuesday 2 December–Sunday 18 January 2009

Matthew Bourne's epic adaptation of the classic Tim Burton movie (pictured) features music by Danny Elfman. It is a touching gothic fairytale about a boy created by an inventor who dies, leaving him with only scissors for hands.

Tickets: £10-50. **Contact:** 0844 412 4300 or www.sadlerswells.com

Through the keyhole Samantha Whitaker visits some of the capital's most interesting buildings to celebrate the Open House London weekend

Hurrying around as we do, living our busy lives, it is easy to forget to look up and take note of the buildings we pass every day. The Open House organisation aims to encourage people to open their eyes and re-examine their city, and its Open House London weekend gives us the opportunity to explore more than 650 of the city's exemplary buildings free of charge. The event, which has attracted worldwide interest and inspired similar programmes in New York and Dublin, is held annually every September. At many of the buildings, there is also a chance to meet the architects and people who live or work on the site. There is a wonderfully diverse selection of architecture, from the high-tech modernist Lloyds Building by Richard Rogers to the Victorian Turkish Baths in Bishopsgate.

For those who can't make it to the weekend event, many of the buildings offer tours throughout the year, including Kenwood House, Peckham Library, the Old Royal Naval College, the Unicorn Theatre and the Royal Courts of Justice. For something more unusual, the innovative collection of buildings known as 'Container City' at Trinity Buoy Wharf in the London Docklands is fascinating. Here, fully-functioning buildings have been created from re-used shipping containers that now house a variety of tenants, from architects to fashion designers.

The National Theatre runs backstage tours up to six times a day, Monday to Friday, and twice on Saturday. For just £6, a guide will take you to each of the three theatres in the complex: the grand Olivier, which resembles a Greek



GRAND DESIGNS: Container City in London's Docklands is an architectural delight (above). The workshops at the National Theatre are one of the highlights of the backstage tour (below)

amphitheatre but with purple seating (Laurence Olivier's favourite colour); the Lyttelton, a modern proscenium arch; and the Cottesloe, an intimate studio space based loosely on an Elizabethan courtyard theatre.

The tour continues backstage, where you can stand in the wings and on the stage, and wander through the scenic workshops where sets, props and costumes are created. A highlight is the Olivier Theatre's Drum Revolve, a unique piece of stage machinery that allows large pieces of scenery to be loaded from the workshops on ground level and raised to centre stage during a performance. During Open House, tours are shorter, concentrating on the features of the building that make it a veritable machine for theatrical production.

If you are content with seeing the outside of great buildings, Open House also conducts architectural tours covering 'The Square Mile', 'Edges of the City', 'Westminster' and 'The London Docklands' on Saturday mornings. The tour guides, who are architects and architectural writers or historians, are extremely knowledgeable and provide intelligent but accessible commentary. I took the three-hour Square Mile tour, which begins near Tottenham

Court Road station, at The Building Centre. The guide began by pointing out key buildings on the centre's diorama of greater London, including some that are still in the planning stages.

We then took a coach to the Bank of England and the Royal Exchange, and the guide, who works for National Heritage, spoke about the history of the buildings and the challenge of balancing conservation with progress. We strolled around the City, where modern buildings such as Norman Foster's 30 St Mary Axe, better known as 'The Gherkin', punctuate the skyline, and medieval alleyways lead to miniature churchyards. We walked through Leadenhall Market, a restored Victorian covered market that still sells traditional game, poultry, fish and meat, to Broadgate Complex, Wood Street, the Barbican and Paternoster Square, where Temple Bar, which was originally built in 1672, has been painstakingly restored and re-erected.

Pick up a free copy of the Open House London programme for 20-21 September from any London library or download it from www.openhouse.org.uk. For further details, call 020 3006 7008; for tours, call 020 7383 2131. For National Theatre tours, call 020 7452 3400.



Mid-week wonders

Margaret Adrian-Vallance hunts for truffles and Puccini in Tuscany, with the first in a series on short breaks to take from Over-Seas House, London

The Versilia area of Tuscany has everything – and then a bit more. Wide sandy beaches and safe swimming water meet the fabulous foothills of the Apuan Alps. Roses, fruit and tomatoes grow to epic proportions, while in the mountains, rare species flourish, including snow voles, sea crows, orchids and chiroptera. Music flourishes too: Puccini was born here, the Lucca opera festival is world famous and there is a new open-air theatre at Torre del Lago Puccini.

Versilia is sufficiently distant from Florence to remain unspoilt. It is a cyclist's heaven, with special pathways in resorts, Lucca and even up in the hills. You can go on a truffle search, medicinal plant tour, and olive oil and wine tastings, have a spa day, visit marble quarries, study bats, go shopping, or relax in your villa, eating exquisitely cooked fish and listening to the nightingales.

On a three-day visit with Tuscany in Style, I selected truffle tasting with the Savini family (seven courses and, yes, the taste is wonderful), visits to Lucca, Puccini's house and hill-top villages, wine tasting and bee-keeping. My guides, who spoke good English, were knowledgeable, good company and enthusiastic about the area.

Tuscany in Style give a 10% discount to ROSL members and donate a percentage of bookings to the ROSL Namibia project. They offer tailor-made holidays as well as a wide range of accommodation throughout Versilia for the independent traveller. If you're staying at Over-Seas House, you can leave bigger cases with reception and collect them on your return.



AN ITALIAN IDYLL: Margaret with the guides and guests at the truffle tasting adventure (above). A typical Versilian villa, with vines and stunning views (left)



Arts in the city

James Wilkie looks at what's on in Edinburgh

Scottish Ballet's Mixed Bill at the Festival Theatre includes *Pennies from Heaven*, *MG: The Movie* and *Ride the Beast* (25–27 September), while *Carousel*, at the same venue, stars Lesley Garret (6–11 October). There is then a Stravinsky celebration (4–5 November) followed by Verdi's *La Traviata*, performed by Scottish Opera (19, 23, 27 and 29 November).

At the King's Theatre, there is a performance of *Calendar Girls* (14–18 October), and a set by singer Eddie Reader (16 October). The Playhouse has *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* in September and *Mary*

Poppins in October and November.

In the visual arts, the Queen's Gallery at the Palace of Holyrood House offers Renaissance Italian art from the Royal Collection until 26 October, and the National Gallery continues its tremendously popular 'Impressionism and Scotland' exhibition until 12 October. The Vanity Fair Portraits continue at the Portrait Gallery until September 21, and the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art is featuring the work of Tracey Emin until 9 November.

FANCY FOOTWORK: *Pennies from Heaven*, part of the Scottish Ballet's Mixed Bill



EDINBURGH

What's on...

September–November

September

Bridge Club lunch

Friday 5 September, 12.30 for 1pm
Over-Seas House, Edinburgh
 One-course lunch plus sherry and guest day. Tickets: £9.

October

Arts lunch

Wednesday 1 October, 12noon
Over-Seas House, Edinburgh
 Two-course lunch with music from St Mary's Music School. Tickets: £14.50; £16.50 non-members.

Coffee morning

Saturday 11 October, 10.30am
Over-Seas House, Edinburgh
 Coffee mornings are on the second Saturday of the month.

Music with a view

Wednesday 15 October, 6.30pm
Over-Seas House, Edinburgh
 Music from pianist Matteusz Borowiak and paintings by Jason Gibilaro (tbc), with wine and canapés. Tickets: £8; non-members £10; Friends of ROSL ARTS £6.

Theatre visit

Wednesday 22 October, matinee
Over-Seas House, Edinburgh
 For details, see the notice board or www.rosl-edinburgh.org.uk

Chairman's reception

Wednesday 29 October, 6.30pm
Over-Seas House, Edinburgh
 Reception for new members.

November

Arts lunch

Wednesday 5 November, 12noon
Over-Seas House, Edinburgh
 Two-course benefit lunch for the Centre for African Studies. Dr Ola Uduku will speak on 'Modern African Architecture'. Tickets: £14.50; non-members £16.50, including a glass of wine.

Coffee morning

Saturday 8 November, 10.30am
Over-Seas House, Edinburgh

Concert

Wednesday 12 November, 6.30pm
Over-Seas House, Edinburgh
 Violin and piano duet with violinist Grace Lee (Singapore); wine and canapés. Tickets: £8; non-members £10; Friends of ROSL ARTS £6.

St Andrew's Day dinner

Saturday 29 November,
7pm for 7.30pm
Over-Seas House, Edinburgh
 Three-course dinner plus wine. Speaker tbc. Tickets: £24.

Tickets are available one month in advance. Tel 0131 225 1501.

GLASGOW

October

Malawi Project Talk

Friday 3 October, 2pm, Western Club
 Talk by Tony Begley on the Malawi project at Holyrood School.



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ROSL ARTS

Roderick Lakin takes a look at the arts programme for autumn

Music events

Over-Seas House, Princess Alexandra Hall

Enchanted

Wednesday 8 October, 7pm
Jill Kemp (recorder)

Enchanted uses projected images, narrative and bamboo to take the audience on a multi-sensory musical journey. Watch the story unfold through a series of works by Sarasate, Vivaldi and Bowen, culminating in a work for recorders, piano and soundscape written especially for Jill Kemp.

Ian Partridge in conversation with Roderick Lakin

Tuesday 21 October, 7pm

The celebrated English tenor Ian Partridge, who

retired from the concert platform earlier this year, looks back on a distinguished career spanning more than 50 years and plays some of his favourite recordings, including many gems from the archives of the BBC.

Music at Over-Seas House

Tuesday 18 November, 7pm
Grace Lee (violin) and Tadashi Imai (piano)
Prize-winning Singaporean violinist Grace Lee presents a programme of works by Grieg, Schubert and Stravinsky.

Samba

Wednesday 3 December, 7pm
Sarah Field (saxophone)
Following the sell-out success of *Tango* last year, Sarah Field turns her attention to another Latin American classic: the samba. After the performance of a diverse range of



ENCHANTING: Jill Kemp performs Chris Gander's magical work for recorders, piano and soundscape

world music, there will be a samba demonstration and classes for all levels. The ticket price includes a cocktail in the interval.
Tickets for all events: £10; ROSL members and concessions £9; Friends of ROSL ARTS £8.

Wigmore Hall

Danny Driver

Sunday 12 October 7.30pm
Danny Driver (piano)

Fresh from recording the complete York Bowen piano sonatas for Hyperion, Danny Driver performs the passionate, richly romantic *Fifth Sonata*. This will be preceded by two great masterpieces of the piano repertoire with strong literary connections: Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, inspired by ETA Hoffman, and *Gaspard de la Nuit*, Ravel's transcendental response to three poems by Aloysius Bertrand.

Tickets: £18, £16, £12, £10. Available from Wigmore Hall box office only. Tel: 020 7935 2141, Web: www.wigmore-hall.org.uk.

Annual Music Competition Winners Concert

Monday 3 November, 7.30pm
Cappa Ensemble: Bartosz Woroch (violin), Adam Newman (viola), Brian O'Kane (cello), Alasdair Beatson (piano), Pei Sian Ng (cello), Daniel de Borah (piano)

The bi-annual showcase concert for ROSL Annual Music Competition prizewinners brings together major prizewinners of the 2006 and 2007 competitions in a wide-ranging programme of music by Schnittke, Prokofiev, Webern and Martinu, culminating

NEW FOR AUTUMN 2008: SUNDAY AT 3 PIANO SERIES

Sunday 28 September, Sunday 19 October and Sunday 16 November



The musicians and programmes for this new series of hour-long concerts on Sunday afternoons have been chosen by three distinguished pianists: Vanessa Latarche, Simon Lepper and Frank Wibaut. These former ROSL Music Competition prizewinners helped the Director of Arts to select the new instrument. Details of the Sunday at 3 programme are available on the ROSL ARTS website (www.roslarts.org.uk).

Tickets: £10; ROSL members and concessions £9; Friends of ROSL ARTS £8, including tea and scones served afterwards.

EVENTS



SHOWCASE: Cappa Ensemble (l-r) Bartosz Woroch, Adam Newman and Brian O'Kane

with Brahms' glorious *G Minor Piano Quartet*.
Tickets: £10, reduced from £16–18; ROSL members and concessions £9; Friends of ROSL ARTS £8. These reduced-price tickets are only available from ROSL ARTS, not from Wigmore Hall box office.

Book events

Over-Seas House, Princess Alexandra Hall

Paul Doherty

Wednesday 1 October, 7pm

Avid readers of historical fiction will have come across the work of Paul Doherty. He has written 47 novels in 13 years, under several pseudonyms, on a remarkable range of subjects. His hugely popular mediaevalist novels include the Hugh Corbett series set in the reign of Edward I. His most recent series is set in 4th-century Rome and features Claudia, in the pay of the Emperor Constantine's mother, Helena.
Tickets: £5; ROSL members and concessions £4.50; Friends of ROSL ARTS £4. Wine, served afterwards, is included.

Dominic Hibberd

Wednesday 5 November, 7pm

Dominic Hibberd talks about *Winter of the*

World, his new anthology of more than 270 poems about the First World War – the most complete and authoritative ever compiled. Arranged by year rather than by poet, the book includes accompanying notes about the poems, historical events and the poets, making for a fascinating and moving narrative.
Tickets: £5; ROSL members and concessions £4.50; Friends of ROSL ARTS £4. Wine, served afterwards, is included.

Leo Hollis

Wednesday 26 November, 7pm

Leo Hollis's *The Phoenix: How the Great Fire of London Gave Birth to Modernity* tells the story of the rebirth of the city through the lives of five men: the gardener and diarist John Evelyn, the speculator and builder Nicholas Barbon, the philosopher John Locke, the scientist and architect Robert Hooke and his fellow architect Christopher Wren.

Tickets: £5; ROSL members and concessions £4.50; Friends of ROSL ARTS £4. Wine, served afterwards, is included.

Visual arts

ROSL Annual Scholars' Exhibition 2008

the.gallery@oxo

Thursday 25 September–Sunday 12 October
ROSL ARTS returns to the gallery of the landmark Oxo Tower, situated between Tate Modern and the National Theatre on the riverside walkway of London's vibrant South Bank. The exhibition brings together work in



SCHOLARS EXHIBITION: Mixed media work by New Zealand artist Joanna Langford

a variety of media by Jacob Carter (UK), Joanna Langford (New Zealand), Christina Papakyriakou (Cyprus), Lauren Porter (UK) and Jeremy Sharma (Singapore).

Open daily 11am–6pm. Admission free.
the.gallery@oxo, Oxo Tower Wharf, Bargehouse Street, South Bank, London SE1.
www.oxotower.co.uk.

Tickets for all ROSL ARTS events are available from the ROSL ARTS London office (unless otherwise stated).
Tel: 020 7408 0314 x324; **Fax:** 020 7499 6738;
Email: culture@rosl.org.uk;
Web: www.roslarts.org.uk.

SOUTH AFRICAN WINS 2008 CAINE PRIZE



The year's Caine Prize for African writing was won by Henrietta Rose-Innes from South Africa, with her short story *Poison* from *Africa Pens*, published by Spearhead. The award was announced by the chairman of this year's panel of judges, Jude Kelly, artistic director of the Southbank Centre, at a celebratory dinner held at the Bodleian Library in Oxford. The League has supported the Caine Prize since 2001, providing accommodation for the shortlisted writers at Over-Seas House, London. During their stay, the shortlisted writers gave readings in the Princess Alexandra Hall.

Food and drink



Autumn food festival: A Taste of Morocco

3–15 November

A two-week exploration of the finest Moroccan cuisine. Come and taste authentic delights inspired by our Moroccan head chef Losine Khezour (pictured).

Christmas Day

25 December

Christmas day lunch begins at noon, with a drinks reception in Princess Alexandra Hall, followed by a four-course lunch and The Queen's speech. It ends at 4pm. Tickets cost £77.50, including a half bottle of wine and a gift.

Over-Seas House is the perfect venue for your private Christmas parties and dinners. We have a number of exquisitely decorated rooms that can be hired at very competitive rates. Please contact Bianca for further information.

New Year's Eve

31 December

For a night of fine dining and enjoyment, book your ticket to ROSL's New Year's Eve candlelit dinner and entertainment. The ticket price is £85, including champagne on arrival and a delicious four-course meal, followed by music and dancing. Members are asked to arrive by 9pm.

To make a restaurant reservation, call Bianca on 020 7491 3644.

Fine dining

The Mountbatten Room has been refurbished. This unique room with original period details and a feature fireplace looks brighter and more delightful than ever. To book a private lunch or dinner from our new fine dining menus, call Bianca on 020 7491 3644.

Application form for members' events *(see pg. 35)*

Name.....
Membership number.....

Name of guest(s) and trip they are attending
.....
.....
.....

UK address to which tickets should be sent
.....
.....
.....
Telephone number
.....
.....

Please also provide regular
correspondence address
.....
.....
.....

I enclose a cheque(s) for a total of
£.....

(Payable to ROSL, crossed and in sterling)

Credit card bookings by telephone only:
020 7016 6906

Please complete this form and send with cheque only to:

Alex Debarge, Public Relations Department (Members Events Programme), Royal Over-Seas League, Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's Street, London SW1A 1LR. Tel: 020 7016 6906
Email: adebarge@rosl.org.uk. **PLEASE SEND A SEPARATE CHEQUE FOR EACH EVENT.**

			No. of tickets
Historic Chelsea	Mon 22 Sept	£13.50 £.....
Chiswick House	Wed 1 Oct	£10 £.....
World Rugby Museum and Twickenham			
Stadium tour	Tues 14 Oct	£11 £.....
V&A	Fri 14 Nov	£13 £.....
Chairman's Lunch	Tues 18 Nov	£50 £.....
Festival of Christmas carols and readings	Sun 7 Dec	£16 £.....
			Total £.....

APPLICATIONS FOR BALLOTTED TICKETS ONLY
MAXIMUM TWO TICKETS PER MEMBER. DO NOT SEND PAYMENT YET, YOU WILL BE CONTACTED IF SUCCESSFUL

		No. of tickets	Apply before
Tower Bridge experience	6 October	26 September
Backstage at the National Theatre	11 November	24 October

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Members' events

September–December

September

Historic Chelsea

Monday 22 September, 2.30pm, £13.50, G

A few steps away from Kings Road is a tranquil riverside village. View the Royal Hospital, visit Chelsea Old Church, discover the garden from where the first cotton plants were sent to the Americas and see the site of Thomas More's mansion.

October

Chiswick House and Gardens

Wednesday 1 October, 11am, £10, G

Set in a beautiful 65-acre estate in West London, Chiswick House is one of the finest examples of neo-Palladian architecture in England. Enjoy a guided tour, with tea and biscuits on arrival.

Tower Bridge experience

Monday 6 October, 4pm, £23, B

A unique opportunity to go behind

the scenes of this famous London landmark on a private tour. Learn about the history of the bridge, visit the control rooms and Tower Bridge Exhibition and go down to the immense bascule chambers, which reach below the riverbed.

World Rugby Museum and Twickenham Stadium tour

Tuesday 14 October, 1.30pm, £11, G

This tour will take you to the players' dressing rooms, through the players' tunnel, on to the pitch and to the top of the North Stand for some breathtaking views. The trip also includes the chance to find out about the history of the game across the globe and explore an exciting series of special exhibitions at the World Rugby Museum.

November

Backstage at the National Theatre

Tuesday 11 November, 10.30am, £8, B

On this behind-the-scenes tour you



EXPLORING LONDON: Twickenham Rugby Stadium (above); The Royal Hospital Chelsea, home of the Chelsea Pensioners, which can be seen on the Historic Chelsea tour (top)

can explore the three auditoriums, front-of-house, scenic workshops and backstage areas.

Victoria and Albert Museum

Friday 14 November, 11am, £13, G

Founded after the Great Exhibition of 1851 to showcase outstanding design, the V&A has grown to such an extent that it would now take several days to explore the whole collection. This guided tour will help you navigate the large site, and make sense of the history and development of the building. You will visit the sculpture galleries, the plaster courts, the Hereford Screen and highlights from the British galleries.

December

Festival of Christmas carols and readings

Sunday 7 December, 3.30pm, £16, G

The League's annual Carol Service at



St James's, Piccadilly, followed by a traditional Christmas tea at Over-Seas House, London. This is the perfect opportunity for members and their families to get into the festive spirit!

Chairman's Autumn Lunch

Tuesday 18 November, 12pm, £50, G

The Rt Hon Lord Butler of Brockwell KG GCB CVO, a former Master of University College Oxford and former Secretary of the Cabinet, will be the guest of honour at the Chairman's Lunch. He will speak on 'Recollections of a Cabinet Secretary'. Tickets to the reception, hosted by League Chairman Stanley Martin, include a three-course lunch with coffee and wine, which will be served promptly at 12.30pm. Members may bring guests.

Application form on page 33

These codes identify ticket availability:

M Members only

G Tickets available for members and their guests

R Restricted number of tickets available

B Tickets to be allocated by ballot. Payment for balloted tickets is not needed until tickets are allocated. Maximum two tickets per member. Only successful applicants will be notified.

Please also note: We do not acknowledge receipt of applications, but tickets are always sent out in advance. Refunds can only be given if cancellations are made at least 15 working days in advance. We do not provide refunds for tickets costing less than £5. Tickets for all events are limited and members should apply early to avoid disappointment. Tickets may be restricted to two per member for popular events. Members will be sent tickets seven days prior to each particular event.

MEMBERS' ADVERTISING

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO. Comfortable home sleeps 8. Hot tub. Free shuttle to slopes. Downhill, cross country and snow shoeing. Walk to restaurants, shops and famous hot springs. Available weekly from \$2,400. *Email: vgodfrey@att.net*

CENTRAL FRANCE (CHER). Three charming gites equipped to high standards, sleeping 2–12. In quiet locations (one in town, two adjoining in countryside with pool and jacuzzi) for a relaxing break. Longer lets available. ROSL member discounts. *Tel: +33 (0)2 48 56 36 32; Email: info@franceprofondegites.net; Web: www.franceprofondegites.net*

AUCKLAND, NZ. For sale: gorgeous views, Remuera 2bedrm, 2bathrm, spacious open-plan apartment, 1garage, onsite manager, in midst of shops cafes restaurants. NZ\$1million+. *Email: usetext@ihug.co.nz*

CORNWALL. North Cornwall cottages (sleeping 4 or 8) in quiet hamlet one mile from coast. Well-behaved dogs welcome. Riding and walking country. Longer lets available out of season. *Tel: 01288 331204; Web: www.gooseham-barton.com*

VENICE CENTRAL. Tranquil, sunny apartment. Wonderful canalside location. Two bedrooms, two bathrooms. *Tel: 020 7701 7540; Web: venicecanalsideapartment.co.uk*

Members can advertise at a cost of £1 per word plus VAT, min 30 words. Copy by 26 September. Contact Alex Debarge on 020 7016 6906 or email adebarge@rosl.org.uk. No advertisements are endorsed or recommended by the Royal Over-Seas League.

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Applicants must be mobile, able to look after themselves and attend meals. There are no medical facilities at Huntly, although a local doctor visits each week and welfare officers are employed to provide support for the residents. All residents pay a standard fee that covers their accommodation, meals and welfare support.

Contact the House Governor on Tel: 01626 775223, Fax: 01626 779241 Email: huntly2@officersassociation.org.uk for further details and a colour brochure and application form. Or visit our Website: www.officersassociation.org.uk



Tuscany in Style based in Pietrasanta in the heart of Versilia together with La Dolce Vita in the Valdera region invite you to a series of autumn feasts that will delight the sight, the palate and the taste buds.

These are just a sample of the autumn delights we have in store. Accommodation will be offered in private lodgings. The events can be combined with a range of art & cultural visits. On all the events you are accompanied by a personal guide and they are tailor made to suit your time and needs

Autumn Delights in Northern Tuscany

Truffle hunt with truffle lunch or dinner

The real treasure of the Tuscan undergrowth is the rare and much sought after white truffle. The truffle hunt and tasting will be hosted by famous local truffles experts in the San Miniato area. An unforgettable experience of Tuscany.

Wine making and wine tasting

Tuscany is renowned all over the world for its D.O.C., I.G.T and D.O.C.G. wines. Discover this enchanted world which is still deeply rooted in local tradition. What better way to experience the wine making process.

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Discussion Group & London Group

DISCUSSION GROUP

Meetings will be held at Over-Seas House London on the following Monday evenings from 7 to 8.30pm. There is no charge. All League members and guests are welcome. For more information please contact Tim Toyne Sewell, timtoynesewell@googlemail.com

Whips and Conservative politics

13 October With Andrew Robathan MP, Deputy Opposition Chief Whip in the House of Commons.

Christianity and Islam

3 November With Bishop Nazir Ali, the Bishop of Rochester.

More than just surviving

1 December With Chris Hingley, Rector of the Petra Schools in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, on the school's determination to grow and develop during the present crisis.

The problem with Western dumb-ocracies

2 February 2009 With Dr John Bird, founder of *The Big Issue*.

LONDON GROUP

Kindly note that you are not automatically a member of the London Group. Please apply for an application form from the Public Relations department, Over-Seas House, London. The London Group meets at 6.30pm on the first and third Thursdays of each month. For more information please contact Beryl Keen, 020 8449 5686.



STAR ATTRACTIONS: (clockwise from left) The Common Blackbird (6 November); Bernard Cazanove, Caroline Cazenove, Mike Jackson and League Chairman Stanley Martin (l-r) at Over-Seas House, London prior to the Discussion Group dinner in June; Lord's Cricket Ground (2 October); Doreen Regan and Nils Regan of the London Group experienced a taste of sporting victory on a tour of the new Wembley Stadium in April

London's unknown sculptor: Thomas Brock and the Victoria Memorial

4 September An illustrated talk by John Sankey, a British diplomat and expert on Sir Thomas Brock.

How woods work

18 September An illustrated talk by Charles Hill, a retired doctor and tree specialist.

2 October An illustrated talk by Glenys Williams, a historian and archivist for Lord's Cricket Ground and Marylebone Cricket Club.

Fine art on porcelain

16 October A demonstration by Sonia Bridley.

The work of the RSPB

6 November An illustrated talk by Roger Tomlinson of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds with a special look at London's feathered friends.

From chaps to chavs

20 November A talk on the development of the English language by former English teacher Colin Street, who is now a Blue Badge Guide.

A unique occasion: House of Lords

4 December, 6.30-8.30pm

A reception to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the London Group, hosted by the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein. Tickets cost £35 and applications should be sent to: Doreen Regan, London Group, c/o Porters' Desk, Over-Seas House, London together with a cheque payable to London Group ROSL. Early application is advisable. For more information please telephone Doreen Regan on 020 7584 5879.

Too old to fight

For over 180 years the Gurkhas have helped to fight our wars and keep our peace. Gurkhas have won 13 Victoria Crosses and have served in most of the major conflicts of the 20th century.

If there was a minute's silence for every Gurkha casualty from World War Two alone, we would have to keep quiet for two whole weeks. But silence will not help the living, the wounded and disabled, those without military pensions following World War Two service or redundancy, or those left destitute by ill health or natural disasters.

There is no doubt that we in this country owe the Gurkhas a debt of honour, and the Gurkha Welfare Trust is seeking to repay that debt. The work of the Trust is now vital to the health, well-being and quality of life for thousands of Gurkha old soldiers and their dependants.

Please will you help us? Anything you can send now will be gratefully received and carefully used in relieving hardship and distress among Gurkha ex-servicemen and their dependants in Nepal.



This is Rifleman Lalbahadur Thapa (L) aged 93 and his younger brother Rifleman Dilbahadur Thapa. Both served with 6th Gurkha Rifles throughout World War Two.

The brothers keep each other company on the five day walk they make every three months from their home village to the nearest Gurkha Welfare Trust Area Welfare Centre to collect their 'welfare pension'. This money is their only source of income and all that stands between them and destitution.

I would like to help these proud, gallant people who served Britain so well and gave so much for my freedom. Here is my gift:

☐ £20 supports a soldier/widow for one month

☐ £60 supports a soldier/widow for three months

☐ £240 supports a soldier/widow for a whole year

☐ £..... my preferred amount

☐ I may wish to sponsor a Welfare Pensioner each month. Please send details.



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Issue No.

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I enclose a cheque (tick if applicable)

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Address.....

Postcode.....

Signature.....

Data Protection Act. We may occasionally wish to contact you about our work. If you would prefer that we do not, please tick here. ☐

ROC

The Gurkha Welfare Trust

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On the 27th October 2008, the Royal Over-Seas League will experience...

A touch of the

Unorthodox



Members of the Royal Over-Seas League have always been slightly unconventional, more willing and able than most to see life from all sorts of differing perspectives. Which is why we have chosen the ROSL to launch our latest collection of holidays that are a little out of the ordinary. Holidays with a touch of the Unorthodox about them.

The 36 page brochure showcases a selection of remarkable holidays in unusual, exotic locations, all offering a real sense of adventure far from the crowds but with no compromise on comfort, style or safety. In the brochure you will find over 20 complete (and completely unorthodox) holiday ideas, with flights, tours, transfers etc all taken care of. For example ...



How many people do you know who've been to Costa Rica? Exactly! This truly beautiful country remains unspoiled by tourism, and boasts some remarkable beaches, forests and lakes. Not to mention dolphins, monkeys, turtles and sloths.

Enjoy being active (or indeed behaving like a sloth) for a stunning 8 days in paradise exploring the country's picturesque Pacific Coast aboard the friendly 148 passenger sailing ship, the Wind Star.



Australia has always been a popular destination for Brits, but most remain unaware of the hidden treasures of the Kimberley Coast; its rich aboriginal culture, stunning scenery and of course horizontal waterfalls (no, seriously!).

This is your chance to spend 10 nights in the Australia that very few Brits see, travelling on the superbly fitted-out MV Orion. From Darwin to Broome : google it and you'll see what we mean.



So many people talk about wanting to go to Antarctica but so few people actually do it. But those that do will tell you it's a life experience that is unlike any other. Rich wildlife, monumental glaciers and dramatic scenery make the trip a photographer's delight.

You'll be going for 18 nights via the Falkland islands, sailing on the four-star MS Bremen. (Just because you are thousands of miles from civilisation doesn't mean you can't be really rather comfortable!)

Mundy Cruising the UK's oldest and leading cruise retailer are hosting the "A Touch of the Unorthodox" cruise fair at the Royal Over-Seas League on Monday 27th October between 2pm and 5pm. You will have the opportunity to meet the unorthodox cruise lines face to face, enjoy presentations, music and of course speak with Mundy Cruising's experienced team of cruise consultants. Please call Rachael on 020 7292 2386 to book your complimentary ticket.

We can be more conventional as well. Indeed, Mundy Cruising plc offers a large selection of exceptionally fine holidays. To find out more about us, you are welcome to visit us at our offices near Piccadilly, or visit us online.

The 36 page brochure contains simply far too much to cram into a one page ad, so to order your free copy call: **020 7734 4404**



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