

LONDON ASHRIDGE CIRCLE

PROGRAMME: JANUARY-MAY 2009

Subject to availability, members' guests are most welcome at all social events on payment of a booking fee of £1.00, plus any admission charge.

FRIDAY 05 DECEMBER 2008

CLOSING DATE for TOUR OF BBC BROADCASTING HOUSE

See item under Sunday, 11 January 2009.

THURSDAY 01 JANUARY 2009

WALK IN KEW GARDENS

Meet at Kew Gardens Station (District Line or National Rail) at 11.15 am to be by the Victoria Gate by 11.30 am, or Victoria Gate, Kew Gardens at 11.30 am.

To celebrate the start of Kew Gardens' 250th year, the entrance will be free. You are invited to blow off those Christmas cobwebs with a walk around Kew's unique historic landscape.

THURSDAY 08 JANUARY

**NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM:
"DARWIN" EXHIBITION**

Meet at Natural History Museum (Central Hall under the head of the Diplodocus), Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, at 2.00 for 2.15 pm.

Developed by the American Museum of Natural History in conjunction with the Natural History Museum and Down House, this exhibition offers a rare opportunity to see many specimens collected by Charles Darwin on the voyage of *H.M.S. Beagle*. There is also a recreation of his study at Down House with a display of personal items, including Annie's box, which contains mementoes from his eldest daughter's brief life. Eight special exhibition guest tickets are being donated giving free entry: the normal admission charges are £9.00 adults and £6.00 concessions. Tickets will be given out on the day.

SATURDAY 10 JANUARY

**HACKNEY THEATRE PANTOMIME:
MATINEE "MOTHER GOOSE"**

Details of this visit were given in the last programme, as the closing date for booking was early December.

SUNDAY 11 JANUARY

GUIDED TOUR of BBC BROADCASTING HOUSE

Meet at Main Entrance, Broadcasting House, Portland Place, London W1, at 11.00 am prompt.

The iconic home of BBC broadcasting built in 1932, Broadcasting House was the first ever purpose-built broadcast centre in the UK. Tours are likely to include: Art Deco highlights – the famous main reception with its original mosaic floor, modernist statuary and period lighting; the newly restored and modernised Radio Theatre, home to such shows as *The Goons*, *Band Waggon*, *Round the Horne* and *The News Quiz*; the Council Chamber; radio studios – the new digital spaces where Radio 3 and Radio 4 shows are recorded; public art – the story behind the famous Eric Gill sculptures. The tour lasts approximately 1¼ to 1½ hours and costs £4.50 per person. 20 tickets have been requested.

Please note that Security requires no sharp instruments, such as nail files, scissors, penknives, etc. otherwise these will be confiscated. Large bags should not be brought.

TUESDAY 13 JANUARY

CLOSING DATE for RICHMOND THEATRE

The play is *A Song at Twilight* by Noel Coward, starring Peter Egan and Belinda Lang. See item under Saturday, 25 April.

WEDNESDAY 14 JANUARY**TALK – “THE GOLDEN AGE OF
THE MUSIC HALL”**

Meet at Victory Services Club, 63-79 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF, at 7.00 pm.

Our speaker, Dr Peter Shaw, is a freelance writer, stage reviewer and lecturer, currently researching a book on theatrical rivalries. His talk deals with the world of Victorian and Edwardian Music Hall, roughly constructed and largely working class.

TUESDAY 20 JANUARY**VISIT to GREAT ORMAND STREET
HOSPITAL and MUSEUM**

Meet at Main Entrance, Great Ormand Street Hospital, Great Ormand Street, London WC1, at 10.40 for 11.00 am tour.

We shall see the Museum, Victorian Chapel and, perhaps, some of the public areas. There is no charge but a donation would be welcome.

WEDNESDAY 28 JANUARY**VISIT to JOHN LOBB LTD**

Meet at John Lobb Ltd, 9 St James's Street, London SW1, at 10.50 for 11.00 am.

We shall today have the privilege of visiting this long-established firm of Bootmakers and see some of the work done on the premises. This visit will last approx. 1 hour and is limited to 10 people because of the size of the premises. There is no charge for this visit.

WEDNESDAY 06 FEBRUARY**VISIT to MOUNTED POLICE TRAINING
COLLEGE**

Meet at Imber Court Mounted Branch, Ember Lane, East Molesey, Surrey. Tour commences 11.00 am.

On this visit we shall learn of the work of the College in training the horses and the Police riders. The horses come to Imber Court aged from 4 to 7 years. After assessment, they may be accepted for full training. When trained, their role may be Sovereign's escort, ceremonial, public order, race and football meetings and town and country patrols. We shall also visit the Museum and see the bravery awards to the horses over the years. We shall be able to have lunch at the Sports Club on site. There is no charge for this visit.

SATURDAY 07 FEBRUARY**MUSIC EVENING**

Meet at 5 Neate House, 52/58 Lupus Street, London SW1V 3EG, at 4.00 pm (note earlier time).

Light classical music will be played and a high tea will be served.

WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING followed by
TALK – “THE ROTHSCHILD HOUSES”**

Meet at Victory Services Club, 63-79 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF, at 7.00 pm.

We welcome back RachelKolsky, a prize-winning Blue Badge Guide. She will tell of the famous Rothschild family and the wonderful homes they created with the money they made from international finance.

MONDAY 16 FEBRUARY**VISIT to TRINITY HOUSE**

Meet at Trinity House, Tower Hill, London EC3, at 2.50 for 3.00 pm.

We are fortunate to be able to visit this Grade I listed building with its many fine historic paintings and artefacts relating to navigation and the safety of our seas and coastline. Trinity House is the General Light-house Authority for England, Wales, the Channel Islands and Gibraltar. Pepys was a former Master of Trinity House. The present Master is HRH Duke of Edinburgh. The talk and guided tour will last approx. 1½ hours and the cost is £5.00 per head, payable on the day.

SATURDAY 21 FEBRUARY**VISIT to CAMBRIDGE: FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM
and THE CORPUS CLOCK**

Meet at King's Cross Station at 11.00 am (with tickets); train dep. 11.15 am, arr. 12.15 pm.

On arrival at Cambridge, we shall meet June King outside the station and make our way by bus to the City Centre. We shall have lunch at the University Centre – average price for a 2-course meal is £8.00-£9.00, glass of wine - £2.00. We shall then visit the Fitzwilliam Museum (free entrance) which is housing the Exhibition "I turned it into a Palace", the title being taken from a quotation by Sir Sydney Cockerell, Curator from 1908-1937, - *I found a pigsty: I turned it into a Palace*. The exhibition includes pre-Raphaelite paintings, a selection of drawings by Turner, Roman and Greek antiquities, original scores by Mozart and Scarlatti and many medieval illuminated manuscripts including the Macclesfield Psalter. Finally, we see the Corpus Clock. This unique gold mathematical clock, the only one in the world, was designed by Dr John C Taylor, a past graduate and now a Fellow of Corpus Christi College. The clock was recently unveiled by Prof. Stephen Hawking.

FRIDAY 27 FEBRUARY**GUIDED TOUR: BARTS & SMITHFIELD**

Meet at The Henry VIII Gate, St Bartholomew's Hospital, West Smithfield, London EC1, for the tour which commences at 2.00 pm.

Founded in 1123 by a monk named Rahere and granted by Henry VIII to the City of London in 1546, St Bartholomew's Hospital has been caring for the sick and injured on its present site in Smithfield for almost nine centuries. Conducted by members of the City of London Guide Lecturers Association, this tour will take you through the history, visiting the Church of St Bartholomew the Less, the Church of St Bartholomew the Great, the Hospital's square, Cloth Fair in Smithfield, North Wing and Great Hall (designed by James Gibb), Hogarth's famous biblical paintings. Cost is £5.00, concessions £4.00, payable on the day and subject to additional charge at the Church of St Bartholomew the Great. The proceeds are donated to the Barts Heritage Appeal.

SUNDAY 01 MARCH**LUNCH at THE WETLAND CENTRE, BARNES**

Meet at The London Wetland Centre, Queen Elizabeth's Walk, London SW13 9WT, at 12.30 for 1.00 pm.

The 3-course meal, including roasts and vegetables, costs £24.95 (vegetarian meal also available), which includes entrance to the Wetland Centre after 11.00 am. Please note that drinks are extra and you will pay for these on the day.

SATURDAY 07 MARCH**MUSIC EVENING**

Meet at 27 Falkland Avenue, New Southgate, London N11 1JS, at 5.00 for 5.30 pm.

A programme of music for all tastes. A light buffet supper, with wine, will be served. Cost £5.00 per head.

MONDAY 09 MARCH**WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR**

Meet at Natural History Museum (Central Hall under the head of the Diplodocus), Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, at 11.00 am.

This exhibition, showing the year's winning natural history images, is always spectacular and very enjoyable. The full admission charge is £7.00, concessions £3.50. There may be a short wait if the exhibition is crowded.

WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH**TALK – "SCANDALS IN SYDENHAM"**

Meet at Victory Services Club, 63-79 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF, at 7.00 pm.

Steve Grindlay will portray some of the well known characters who lived in Sydenham, where he resides, and the scandals which surrounded them: Sir Arthur Sullivan; the mysterious death of Eleanor Marx (daughter of Karl Marx); the strange disappearance of the Irish Crown jewels (which have never been found); and one of the Shackleton brothers.

WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH**THE CHARTERED INSURANCE INSTITUTE
and THE FIREMARK COLLECTION**

Meet at The Chartered Insurance Institute, 20 Aldermanbury, London EC2, at 10.50 for 11.00 am.

As the work being carried out on the lift system at the Institute took rather longer than anticipated, this visit, which appeared in a previous programme, has to be cancelled.

We shall have a presentation about the Chartered Insurance Institute itself and the history of the site on which the building is situated, which can be dated back to 48 AD, as well as a tour of the building with particular reference to the collection of firemarks, mainly located on the staircases. The various floors show examples of firemarks and plates from many countries and form a precious heritage for the insurance industry as we know it today. It is anticipated the visit will last approx. 1½ hours. There is no charge.

WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH**TAPAS LUNCH**

Meet at Galacia Restaurant, 269-275 High Street, Croydon, at 12.20 pm.

2-course lunch with coffee or soft drink - £7.95. Desserts extra. Licensed bar.

SUNDAY 29 MARCH**VISIT to THE MUSICAL MUSEUM**

Meet at The Musical Museum, 399 High Street, Brentford, Middx TW8 0DU, at 11.15 for 11.30 am.

This visit, which was included in the last programme, had to be unavoidably postponed.

We shall be having a guided tour of the Museum, which contains one of the world's foremost collections of self-playing musical instruments – from the tiniest clockwork musical boxes to the 'Mighty Wurlitzer'. Arranged over three stories, the museum houses a concert hall that seats up to 230 people, the focal point of which is the 'Mighty Wurlitzer' console which rises from beneath the stage to entertain visitors. The visit should take about 1½ hours. Admission £7.00, concessions £5.50. There is the Riverside Tea Room, which is open for light refreshments.

WEDNESDAY 01 APRIL**CLOSING DATE for TOUR of
GUNNERSBURY PARK MANSION**

See item under Thursday, 15 April.

SATURDAY 04 APRIL**MUSIC AFTERNOON**

Meet at 3 Langworthy, Royston Grove, Hatch End, Middx HA5 4HE, at 3.00 for 3.30 pm.

Join Betty for an afternoon, listening to light classical music. Cream tea will be served. £5.00 will be collected on the day.

WEDNESDAY 08 APRIL**TALK – “THE NATIONAL TRUST AND
HOW IT WORKS”**

Meet at Victory Services Club, 63-79 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF, at 7.00 pm.

Mike Watts also makes a welcome return. He will explain what the National Trust is and how it developed, with a brief picture of the wide range and complexity of work, money and people needed to maintain its many responsibilities, and how it intends to develop.

THURSDAY 16 APRIL**BELOW STAIRS at GUNNERSBURY PARK
MANSION**

Meet at Gunnersbury Park Mansion, Gunnersbury Park, Popes Lane, London W3 8LQ, at 10.55 for the 11.00 am tour.

We shall have a guided tour of the former home of the Illustrious Rothschild Family. Mr Armstrong (The Butler) and Mrs Weller (Housekeeper in Residence) cordially invite us to step back in time for an informative 'Victorian' viewing of the house that once belonged to their distinguished employers. The Victorian Head Servant will guide us around The Large Mansion at Gunnersbury where we shall be afforded exclusive

access to the impressive Victorian kitchens. It is hoped that we shall be given some sound advice to assist us in the management of our own domestic staff and on the running of our own households, however modest they may be!

Based on a minimum of 12 people, the cost is £4.65 per head, so if, say, there are only 10 of us then the cost will be proportionately higher (£5.58).

SATURDAY 25 APRIL

RICHMOND THEATRE

Meet at Carluccios, at 12 noon (if requiring lunch), or Foyer of Richmond Theatre, The Green, Richmond, at 2.15 for the 2.30 pm performance.

20 seats have been reserved for *A Song at Twilight* by Noel Coward, starring Peter Egan and Belinda Lang. It is one of Coward's last plays and is arguably one of his best. It is a comedy and also poignant. The seats are in Row M and for Senior Citizens the cost is £20.00.

WEDNESDAY 29 APRIL

WELLINGTON ARCH

Meet at Wellington Arch, Hyde Park Corner, at 11.00 am.

The Arch was originally commissioned by George IV as the entrance to Buckingham Palace and now commemorates the defeat of Napoleon by the Duke of Wellington at Waterloo. We shall see three floors of exhibits and enter the viewing gallery. Full admission price is £3.30, concessions £2.60, free to English Heritage members.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

WEDNESDAY 13 MAY

TALK – “ROALD DAHL’S WAR”

Graham Laurie will be remembered by all who came to his presentation “The History of Royal Flying”. This time he looks at Roald Dahl's career from leaving school, his employment with Shell, his first overseas post in East Africa, to his life in the RAF and finally to becoming a writer. He saw service in many foreign fields but his war started before he joined the RAF. C S Forester and Ian Fleming are just two names that crop up along the way, which together with his wartime experiences enabled him to become a writer who enchanted millions. Those of us who visited The Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre in October can promise an entertaining evening.

WEDNESDAY 10 JUNE

LONDON ASHRIDGE CIRCLE 60TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

This will be held at Flemings Mayfair Hotel, Half Moon Street, at 6.30 for 7.00 pm.

WRITE THIS DATE IN YOUR DIARY NOW.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

The London Ashridge Circle has computerised its membership details. The information will **NOT** be used for any purpose other than the mailing of London Ashridge Circle information of interest to members, nor will names / addresses / telephone numbers be divulged to any other organisation or person. Any member not wishing to have his / her details held on computer should put this **IN WRITING** to the Chairman, Alan Amos, Flat 9, Danebury, 9 St Quintin Gardens, London W10 6AS.

Please note that if a member's name is not on the computer, he / she will not receive the programme of events by post and can only obtain this at a monthly meeting.