

LONDON ASHRIDGE CIRCLE

PROGRAMME: SEPTEMBER 2008 – JANUARY 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.

WEDNESDAY 03 SEPTEMBER

VISIT to CHERKLEY COURT AND GARDENS

Meet at Leatherhead Station at 11.25 am.

Cherkley Court was acquired by the MP and newspaper proprietor, the First Lord Beaverbrook, in 1910, the year after he entered Parliament. The house was used by him to entertain, amongst others, Bonar Law, Asquith, Rudyard Kipling, Harold Macmillan and Winston Churchill, and was an important centre for his activities as a key member of Churchill's War Cabinet. There are extensive gardens, with breathtaking views over the Mole Valley, and a Tea Room and Coffee Shop serving light lunches and afternoon tea. Admission: Adults £6.00, Concessions £4.70.

TUESDAY 09 SEPTEMBER

VISIT to BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Meet at The Booking Office, Buckingham Palace Road (just past the Gift Shop) at 2.15 pm.

We can enjoy the art, furniture, rooms, ceilings, etc. and this year's spectacle of the Ballroom set up for a State Banquet, first used to celebrate the birthday of George III in 1811.

WEDNESDAY 10 SEPTEMBER

TALK – "THE MASTER – NOEL COWARD as ACTOR, WRITER AND PAINTER"

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

Frances Hughes has delighted us on three occasions with her verbal portraits of giants in the theatre. This time her subject is the multi-talented Noel Coward, known to all in his profession as "The Master".

WEDNESDAY 10 SEPTEMBER

CLOSING DATE for RICHMOND THEATRE "AN IDEAL HUSBAND"

Please see entry under Saturday, 01 November.

SATURDAY 13 SEPTEMBER

MUSIC EVENING

Meet at 22 Falkland Avenue, New Southgate, London N11 1JS, at 5.00 pm.

A mixture of light to classical music. A light buffet supper, with wine, will be served.

MONDAY 15 SEPTEMBER

LUNCH at RUISLIP LIDO

Meet at The Water's Edge, Reservoir Road, Ruislip, at 12.15 pm.

A good Carvery selection for £3.95. Desserts cost £2.00 - £3.00.

THURSDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

MATINEE at BRICK LANE MUSIC HALL

Meet at Pontoon Dock Station (DLR), at 1.00 pm – then 10-minute walk to Theatre

Join us for an entertaining afternoon with some of the finest music hall and variety artists from around the country – including a first-class afternoon tea.

SATURDAY 20 – SUNDAY 21 SEPTEMBER**'OPEN HOUSE' WEEKEND**

During this weekend, access is granted to many buildings – old and new, big and small – many of them normally off limits to the public. It is hoped to have some brochures available at the September meeting so you can visit some of the buildings, perhaps in the company of other Circle members.

SUNDAY 21 SEPTEMBER**CLOSING DATE for VISIT TO YORK**

See item under Thursday, 23 October.

WEDNESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER**DAY IN GUILDFORD**

Meet at Guildford Railway Station, at 12.00 noon.

After arrival in Guildford, we shall have a light lunch – probably in the Guildford House Gallery, which is a fascinating 17th Century Grade I listed Town House. The Gallery Café serves hot and cold homemade snacks and beverages all day. Thereafter we shall join a free guided walk around Guildford town, which will last approximately 1½ hours and will commence at the Tunsgate Arch on the High Street at 2.30 pm.

FRIDAY 26 SEPTEMBER**GREENWICH OBSERVATION WHEEL**

Meet at Greenwich Gateway Visitors Centre at 12 noon – for a light lunch, or Greenwich Observation Wheel at 1.15 for 1.30 pm.

At 55 metres from the ground, visitors will take in panoramic views beyond St Paul's Cathedral and the Tower of London to the west, across the river and past Canary Wharf to the heights of Hampstead Heath, and east to the Olympic site in the Lea Valley. In the foreground, the Maritime Green World Heritage Site will be laid out in a rare perspective. Cost is £7.00.

WEDNESDAY 01 OCTOBER**GUIDED TOUR of ST GEORGE'S BLOOMSBURY
and VISIT to THE CARTOON MUSEUM**

Meet at St George's Church, Bloomsbury Way, London WC1A 2HR, at 10.55 for 11.00 am tour.

Thanks to the generous bequest of Paul Mellon, an American multi-millionaire with a love of English architecture, and with the help of the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage and the World Monuments Fund, this famous Nicholas Hawksmoor church has been saved from destruction and beautifully restored. We shall be given a guided tour, the cost of which is £5.00.

Afterwards, we can have lunch and then go to the Cartoon Museum, which is situated at 35 Little Russell Street (just round the corner from the church) to see the *Beano and Dandy Birthday Bash* celebrating 70 years of publication of these two famous comics with our favourite characters of Dennis the Menace, Desperate Dan, Lord Snooty, etc.etc. Entrance fee is £4.00, Concessions £3.00.

THURSDAY 02 OCTOBER**LUXURY LUNCHEON in
THE PODIUM RESTAURANTE**

Meet inside London Hilton on Park Lane, 22 Park Lane, London W1K 1BE, at 12.45 for 1.00 pm.

A traditional Mediterranean style three-course meal is served at a cost of £22.00, which includes a glass of wine and coffee.

SUNDAY 05 OCTOBER**MUSIC TEATIME**

Meet at 45 Coburg Close, Greencoat Place, London SW1P 1DP, at 3.00 for 3.30 pm.

A light programme of 'teashop' music, some of which may be familiar to you, and some perhaps not, accompanied by an afternoon tea to rival The Savoy!

WEDNESDAY 08 OCTOBER**MONTHLY TALK – “THE PALACE OF
KNIGHTSBRIDGE – A HISTORY OF
HARRODS LIMITED”**

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

Richard Furnival Jones started work as a Trainee in Harrods Food Halls in 1963 and worked his way up, so that on retirement in 2004 he was Shop Floor Manager of the Food Halls and Licensee for all the store. He is therefore well qualified to tell the story of the world-famous store, to which he will add anecdotes of his time there.

SATURDAY 31 OCTOBER**ROALD DAHL MUSEUM**

Meet at The Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre, 81-83 High Street, Great Missenden, HP16 0AL, at 12 noon.

Roald Dahl is well known, not only for his tales with unexpected twists and outcomes, but also for his stories and poems for children, including ‘Charlie and the Chocolate Factory’. This fascinating Museum, which is situated in the village where Roald Dahl lived for 36 years, is well worth a visit, especially for the young at heart. The full admission price is £5.50, concessions £3.95.

There is a café (Café Twit), which serves a range of soups, sandwiches and cakes.

MONDAY 13 OCTOBER**VISIT to the BLOND McINDOE RESEARCH
FOUNDATION**

Meet at the Entrance to East Grinstead Railway Station, at 10.50 am.

Sir Archibald McIndoe was the plastic surgeon who pioneered new ways of treating badly burned aircrew in WWII – the ‘Guinea Pigs’. The centre fulfilled his dream to continue research in the field of wound healing. The visit will include a guided tour of the Centre (not a large area) and a presentation showing work that is carried out, which is in the area of burns, skin and tissue reconstruction and corneas on eyes.

Refreshments will be provided. There is no charge for the visit. Books, greeting cards, and Christmas cards are available for purchase.

THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER**MUSEUM IN DOCKLANDS EXHIBITION:
“JACK THE RIPPER AND THE EAST END”**

Meet at Museum in Docklands, West India Quay, at 11.15 am.

Step back in time to the labyrinth of late-Victorian Whitechapel and explore the lives of the victims, witnesses, suspects and police. From police files and photographs to letters from the public and the supposed Ripper himself, you can examine surviving documents and artefacts from the investigations. Full admission charge is £7.00, Concessions £5.00, and the tickets are timed for every half-hour commencing at 10.15 am so, if we have to wait a short while, we can always have a cup of coffee first.

TUESDAY 21 OCTOBER**ART RELATED AFTERNOON**

Meet at 14 Forsyth House, Tachbrook Street, London SW1V 2LE, at 2.30 pm.

What is art? We all have our own ideas. Do you have a favourite picture? If so, bring along one or more ‘art’ related photographs and see if we agree. It could be a postcard, a photocopy or catalogue. Afternoon tea with homemade cakes will be served. Cost £5.00.

THURSDAY 23 OCTOBER**VISIT to YORK**

Meet at King’s Cross Station. Train departs 10.00 am, arrives York 11.53 am.

There is plenty to see and do in this historic city. The centre is very compact. Take your pick from looking at medieval architecture in the Shambles, visiting the famous Minster, walking the City walls, shopping or, if wet, indoor activities including the extensive Railway Museum, Castle Museum or Viking Museum. There are two town houses open to the public – Fairfax House and the Treasurer’s House (NT), or eating in the famous Betty’s Café.

WEDNESDAY 29 OCTOBER**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.

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. 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.

SATURDAY 01 NOVEMBER**RICHMOND THEATRE**

Meet at Carluccios (opposite station) at 12 noon (if requiring lunch), or Richmond Theatre at 2.15pm (for 2.30 pm matinee).

The play is *An Ideal Husband* by Oscar Wilde, starring Kate O'Mara, Michael Praed, Robert Duncan, Fenella Fielding and Tony Britton. This is a brilliant class comedy, both entertaining and highly topical. 10 seats are available, Row M at a price of £19.00 for senior citizens.

TUESDAY 04 NOVEMBER**LUNCHTIME CONCERT**

Meet at St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, London SW1, at 12.45 for 1.00 pm.

The concert is one of a series given by the Royal Over-seas League. Admission is free but a donation is requested. Tea can be obtained in the crypt after the concert.

THURSDAY 06 NOVEMBER**VISIT to RAGGED SCHOOL MUSEUM**

Meet at Mile End Station (Central/District/Hammersmith & City lines), at 11.00 am.

It is approx. a 7-minute walk from the station to the Museum, which is situated at 46/50 Copperfield Road, London E3 4RR. Today, the building, in which Barnardo provided tens of thousands of East End children with free education, is home to the Ragged School Museum. Visitors can see historical artefacts and images relating to Victorian school home and work life, sit at one of the school desks in the Victoria Classroom and enjoy displays describing how the East End of London has changed since Barnardo's time. There is also a reconstructed Victorian East End kitchen. Entrance is free but a donation would be welcome.

WEDNESDAY 12 NOVEMBER**TALK – "THE HIGH COUNTRY OF AMERICA"**

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

Dr Peter Brandham, who spent his professional life at the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, enthralled us in 2003 with his talk 'A Year at Kew' with his own slides depicting the trees and flowers through the changing seasons. He makes a welcome return to show the upland flora and fauna against a background of the forests, lakes, geysers, hot springs and other geo-thermal features of two of the most beautiful high and cool National Parks in the USA, The Tetons and Yellowstone

WEDNESDAY 19 NOVEMBER**VISIT to THE MUSICAL MUSEUM**

Meet at The Musical Museum, 399 High Street, Brentford, Middx, at 11.30 am.

The Musical Museum contains one of the world's foremost collections of automatic instruments. From the tiny clockwork musical box to the self-playing 'Mighty Wurlitzer', the collection embraces an impressive and comprehensive array of sophisticated reproducing pianos, orchestrions, orchestrelles, residence organs and violin players. The Museum is arranged on three floors. On the ground floor there are four galleries to display working instruments, including a street setting with shop windows full of music, musical toys and street instruments. Adults £7.00, Concessions £5.50.

SUNDAY 23 NOVEMBER**DINING OUT**

Meet by Restaurant Entrance, 372 Restaurant, Strand Palace Hotel, 372 Strand, London WC2R 0JJ, at 12.30 for 1.00 pm.

This popular hotel offers a three-course lunch for £15.50, which is very reasonable for central London.

THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER**GUIDED WALK: KENSINGTON GARDENS
"ART & ARCHITECTURE"**

Meeting point to be advised – 1.45 for 2.00 pm.

Discover that Kensington Gardens is not just grass, trees and flowers. It also contains many fascinating buildings and monuments, each with its own unique story to tell. The walk lasts 1½ hours and is free of charge. Eight tickets have been requested.

THURSDAY 04 DECEMBER**NEW JEWELLERY GALLERY at the
V & A MUSEUM**

Meet inside the Main Entrance, Victoria & Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7.

Its proper title is "The William & Judith Bollinger Jewellery Gallery", showcasing over 3,500 jewels from the V & A's collection; pendants given by Elizabeth I to her courtiers, tiaras worn by Empress Josephine; also, more modern pieces from living goldsmiths from Europe and North America.

SATURDAY 06 DECEMBER**CLOSING DATE FOR HACKNEY THEATRE**

The pantomime is *Mother Goose*. Please see details under Saturday, 10 January 2009.

SUNDAY 07 DECEMBER**CHRISTMAS LUNCH**

Meet at Flemings Mayfair Hotel, 7-12 Half Moon Street, London W1Y 7BH, *£12.15 for 1.00 pm.

The venue for our Christmas Lunch is Flemings Mayfair Hotel, where we always have a very warm welcome. The pre-lunch drinks (not included in the cost of the lunch) in the Clarges Bar will be at 50% discount of the hotel's normal prices. The cost of the meal, inclusive of house wine (or soft drink), gratuities and VAT will be £44.00 per head. Choose from the following menu:

Starter (A) Wild Mushroom Minestrone, (B) Homemade Game Terrine with Red Plum compote & Winter leaves, (C) Melon

Main Course (D) Roast Turkey & Cranberry Wellington, with all the trimmings, (E) Roast stuffed Leg of Lamb with Apricot, coated in fresh herbs and oats, wrapped in streaky bacon and served with a Minted Pork Jus, (F) Grilled Swordfish Steak with spicy Puy Lentil Stew accompanied with Brandy & Mussel Sauce, (G) Mixed Pepper & Spinach Tarte Tatin, finished with glazed goats cheese Tomato salsa & rocket purée

Desserts (H) Christmas Pudding with brandy sauce, (I) Opera (sponge cake layered with mousse), (J) Sherry Trifle, (K) Cheese & Biscuit selection. Coffee.

Your menu choice has to be notified to the hotel ahead of time, so choose one dish from each of the three courses and send your selection with your payment.

**Before you go to the Bar, please pick up your name card (which will show your menu choice) from the table by the door to the restaurant and place it where you wish to sit. This must be done by 12.30 pm in order to give the restaurant staff time to set the tables with the correct cutlery, otherwise your card will be placed on a table for you.*

It is hoped that your January-May 2009 programme will also be available for collection with your name card.

WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER**CHRISTMAS CAROL CONCERT**

Meet at Central Hall, Westminster, London SW1, at 7.30 pm.

The concert, in aid of Parkinson's Disease Society, will be hosted by the President of the Society, Jane Asher, with celebrity guest readers and performers. Tickets, which cost £25.00 for non-members and £12.00 for members, may be obtained from The Parkinson's Disease Society, 215 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1EL, tel: 020 7931 8080. This event has always been popular with Circle members.

FRIDAY 12 DECEMBER

GUIDED TOUR of THE ALBERT HALL

Meet inside the South Porch, Door 12, Royal Albert Hall, London SW7, at 11.15 for 11.30 am tour.

The tour, which lasts about 1 hour, takes a comprehensive look at front-of-house areas with exclusive access to the Royal Retiring Room. Full admission price £8.00, Concessions £7.00.

GOOD WISHES FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON AND A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR TO ALL

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SATURDAY 10 JANUARY

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

Meet at Hackney Theatre, at 2.15 pm (performance starts at 2.30 pm).

10 tickets have been booked. This is a traditional pantomime focusing on stunning sets and costumes, magical spectacle, exciting music and dance, slapstick comedy and great fun. The seats are in the Stalls and the tickets cost £10.00 each, which includes a 50 pence booking fee.

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 of theatrical rivalries.

TOUR OF BBC BROADCASTING HOUSE

John Potter is planning to arrange a tour of this iconic building for inclusion in the January-April programme. The tours, which last approximately 1¼ hours, take place on the first Sunday of each month and cost £6.50, Concessions £5.50, and are limited to 20 people. In order that John may have some idea of how many tickets are required, please contact him by no later than the first week of January.

HOLIDAY FOR 2009

Following a successful holiday with Warner Holidays, it has been decided to go to another of their hotels. Cricket St Thomas in Somerset seems a good choice; it is a beautiful stately home. The hotel has a shop and swimming pool; there is a coffee shop and great grounds. Single rooms are available at no extra cost. Places to visit include Lyme Regis, Forde Abbey Gardens and other Dorset seaside resorts.

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.