

News Briefs

DEMOCRATS ABROAD 4TH OF JULY EVENT IN LONDON

Believe it or not, Londoners have been celebrating American Independence Day since the Declaration of Independence was first signed in 1776. To be sure, quite a few Brits were not celebrating the break with King George III, but in the intervening decades Americans and Britons alike have toasted this momentous occasion in our shared history.

Please join Democrats Abroad UK on Saturday, the 4th of July, in central London at Portman Square Garden W1 for a fun-filled afternoon of food, games and good company. Gates open at 1.00pm and the fun lasts until 5.00pm.

More information: www.democratsabroad.org/group/united-kingdom/

JULY 4TH CONCERT OF AMERICAN MUSIC

At 7.30pm at the Blackheath Halls, one of London's leading concert venues, Lewisham Choral Society and the Aurelian Symphony Orchestra presents a concert of American Music:

Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*

Bernstein's *Candide* overture

John Adam's *Harmonium*

John Rutter's *Feel the Spirit*. (Soloist: Melanie Marshall)

Conductor: Stefan Reid

Alongside the uplifting and jazzy arrangements of seven spirituals by John Rutter and the much loved orchestral works, this evening promises to be a great way to celebrate Independence Day.

Tickets are £12, £15 and £20, (£2 for children under 12) and can be purchased from

the LCS website at www.lewishamchoralso-ciety.org.uk or from the Halls Box Office on 020 8463 0100.

STATUE HONOUR FOR RONALD REAGAN - FORMER US PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN IS TO BE HONOURED WITH A NEW MEMORIAL IN CENTRAL LONDON

A statue of Mr Reagan, who died in 2004, will be placed outside the US Embassy in Grosvenor Square.

Westminster City Council has changed its usual policy of only allowing memorials to people who have been dead for 10 or more years.

The former actor served as US president from 1981 until 1989 and died at the age of 93.

To recognise Mr Reagan's contribution to the end of the Cold War, a piece of the Berlin Wall will be installed in front of the artwork.

American artist Chas Fagan will sculpt the 10ft-high bronze figure, which will stand opposite a statue of former US president Dwight D. Eisenhower on a Portland stone plinth, outside the Embassy.

The statue will cost up to £200,000, with the majority being raised by the California-based Ronald Reagan Foundation. However, some funds will be raised in the UK.

TURNER AND THE MASTERS AT TATE BRITAIN - 23 SEPTEMBER 2009 - 31 JANUARY 2010

TURNER AND THE MASTERS will present a selection of magnificent paintings by JMW Turner (1775 -1851), alongside related works by the old masters and contemporaries he hoped to imitate, rival and surpass.



JMW Turner *Self-Portrait* c. 1799 Tate

This exhibition brings together around one hundred works of supreme historical significance from collections around the world. It will reveal his debts and rivalries and explore his reputation as one of the greatest painters of landscapes in the European tradition, by comparing his work with Canaletto, Claude, Poussin, Rembrandt, Rubens and Van de Velde. There will also be pairings with paintings by Turner's most important British contemporaries, such as Constable and Bonington.

QUEEN & COMMONWEALTH: THE ROYAL TOUR

A special exhibition at the Summer Opening of Buckingham Palace

26 July - 30 September 2009

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the formation of the modern Commonwealth. In 1949 the London Declaration recognised the British Monarch as the symbol of the free association of independent member nations



Woven address, Ghana, 1998

and as Head of the Commonwealth. In celebration of this event, a special exhibition at this year's Summer Opening of Buckingham Palace will evoke some of the most important Commonwealth tours undertaken by The Queen during her reign and show the close links maintained by Her Majesty with this remarkable international organisation and its 1.8 billion inhabitants. Accompanied by The Duke of Edinburgh, The Queen has made over 170 official visits to Commonwealth countries, constituting a third of all her travels abroad.

Queen & Commonwealth: The Royal Tour will bring together 28 dresses worn by Her Majesty on Commonwealth tours over the past six decades, including evening gowns and daywear by the royal couturiers Norman Hartnell, Hardy Amies and Ian Thomas. The exhibition will include over 100 gifts presented to The Queen by the people of the Commonwealth, to mark the important principle of



Diamond 'Wattle' brooch, Australia, 1954

friendship that underlies Her Majesty's visits. These will be set against a backdrop of archive material, photographs and film footage.

In 1952 The Queen assumed the role of Head of the Commonwealth from her late father King George VI, the first monarch to hold the title. The Commonwealth was then an association of just eight members. Today there are 53. Her Majesty has always attached considerable importance to this role and at the time of her accession said: 'The Commonwealth bears no resemblance to the empires of the past. It is an entirely new conception built on the highest qualities of the spirit of man: friendship, loyalty, and the desire for freedom and peace. To that new conception of an equal partnership of nations and races I shall give myself heart and soul every day of my life.'

The Queen's reign commenced with her longest ever Commonwealth tour. This lasted from November 1953 to May 1954, encompassed the West Indies, Australasia, Asia and Africa, and covered 44,000 miles. To mark her Silver Jubilee in 1977, The Queen visited 14 Commonwealth countries and travelled over 56,000 miles, and for the Golden Jubilee in 2002 Her Majesty visited Jamaica, Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

For a Commonwealth tour, Her Majesty's wardrobe is meticulously planned by The Queen's Dresser and designers. The climate must be considered, and the colours of the fabrics should allow The Queen to be clearly visible among large crowds and, for evening wear, complement the country's insignia. As a compliment to the host nation, The Queen's dresses often incorporate national colours or emblems. At a State Dinner in Lahore during the 1961 tour of India and Pakistan, Her Majesty wore a magnificent duchesse-satin gown in ivory and emerald green, the national colours of the country. For the 1974 tour of Australia, the designer Ian Thomas created a dress

and cape of bright yellow silk-chiffon, embroidered with sprays of wattle, the national flower of Australia.

On a visit to Canada on the occasion of the 1976 Montreal Olympics, one of The Queen's dresses was embroidered with stylised Olympic rings.

Gifts to The Queen have taken many forms, from scholarships and bursaries for local people, to plants, food and animals. They are often examples of local craftsmanship and are presented in the traditional ceremonies of the indigenous peoples.



Evening dress, Singapore, 1972

Occasionally, gifts are dazzling items of jewellery. On Christmas Day 1953, the 'Women of Auckland' presented The Queen with a diamond and platinum brooch in the form of a leaf of the silver fern, an important national emblem in New Zealand. In 1954 The Queen received a diamond wattle brooch from the Government and People of Australia on her first Commonwealth tour and visit to Australia.

The Queen has worn the brooches on many subsequent visits to the countries.

The exhibition is accompanied by the book *The Royal Tour: A Souvenir Album*, published by Royal Collection Publications, price £9.99 (hardback).

The Summer Opening of the State Rooms at Buckingham Palace is from 26 July to 30 September 2009.

Open daily 09:45–18:00 (last admission 15:45). Admission by timed ticket.

Admission prices (includes audio guide):

Adult £16.50, Over 60/Student £15.00,

Under 17 £9.50,

Under 5 Free, Family £44.00 (2 adults and 3 under 17s).

Advance tickets:

www.royalcollection.org.uk or

(+44) (0)20 7766 7300 (a booking fee applies).

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

This year's annual Expatriate Relocation Conference & Exhibition will take place on Monday 9th November 2009 at The New Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, Holborn, London and is free to attend.

Come and visit 40 exhibitors who have products and services designed to help and support expatriates whilst they are living away from home.

There are also free seminars throughout the day that you do need to pre-register for – see page 13 for details.

This event is organised by *American in Britain* and has been successfully organised for the past 13 years.

For further information or to register for free tickets, please email helen@theamericanhour.com or call Helen Elliott on 020 8661 0186.

We look forward to seeing you there.

THE AMERICAN HOUR NEWSLETTER

Each month our sister website, www.theamericanhour.com sends out an email newsletter with information on various subjects of interest to American expatriates in the UK, along with news, events and competitions.

To register for this free email newsletter simply email assunta@theamericanhour.com and put 'newsletter' in the subject.

WIN A DINNER FOR 2 WITH A COMPLIMENTARY BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE AT WAXY O'CONNOR'S

Everybody loves a celebration and on July 4th 2009, as Irish and Americans across the world come together to celebrate Independence Day, Waxy O'Connors will be hosting the capital's biggest Independence Day party.

The menu will include American favourites such as BBQ spare ribs, Surf n' Turf and Nachos with cheese. And if you needed more reasons to celebrate, you'll be rewarded for your celebrations with fabulous drinks promotions and plenty of fun giveaways.

In order to enter this competition, simply email helen@theamericanhour.com and put Competition in the subject.

Winners will be notified by 2nd July 2009.

Good luck!