

COMMONWEALTH DAY IN RIYADH & LAUNCH OF ROSL SAUDI ARABIA



The British Ambassador, Sir William Patey, hosted a Commonwealth Day lunch in March. Guests included twenty ambassadors, representing other Commonwealth countries, plus the ROSL Founder Committee members.

Gathering in the Ambassador's Residence on a glorious sunny day, the guests sat down to a meal consisting of items from a range of Commonwealth countries. Sir William read out the Commonwealth Day message from the Head of the Commonwealth, Her Majesty the Queen – who is also ROSL's Patron.

Paul Surtees, who set up ROSL Riyadh and the ROSL branch in Hong Kong, spoke of the importance of

arranging gatherings at which people from many countries can meet each other. The League plans such gatherings in Riyadh with the kind support of Commonwealth and other Ambassadors.

Later, Sir William proposed a toast to H.M. The Queen, and the Maltese Ambassador gave a speech of thanks to Sir William and Lady Patey, on behalf of all of the guests. Mr. Surtees then made a presentation to Sir William, on behalf of the ROSL.

This gathering, the first to mark Commonwealth Day in Saudi Arabia (where many Commonwealth citizens work) was also the launch party for the ROSL's Riyadh Committee.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE

The Royal Over-Seas League is a non profit mutual society which offers members from all countries a wide variety of benefits. These include use of centrally-situated clubhouses in London and Edinburgh and short term access to over 80 reciprocal clubs in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Ireland and elsewhere.

League members can enjoy a variety of social and cultural events nearer home through the League's Branches or Committees in Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Thailand, Switzerland - and more recently, in Riyadh.

The League was founded by Sir Evelyn Wrench in 1910 to foster international understanding. Unlike other clubs in London at the time, membership was open to both men and women on equal terms. For this reason the League has a long tradition of enabling solo lady travellers to feel safe and at ease.

The League was granted a Royal Charter of Incorporation in 1922 and HM The Queen became its Patron in 1952. The League today is both an association of individual members (21,000) from all countries and a non-governmental organisation which supports the Commonwealth through its own social, arts and welfare activities. These include classical music competitions, art exhibitions, literary lectures and an educational project in Namibia.

The London clubhouse, near the Ritz Hotel provides a comfortable home from home in central London. There are 77 en suite bedrooms with air conditioning, broadband internet connections, and a range of other facilities including a private garden with al fresco dining in Summer, souvenir shop, seven conference and private dining rooms and a central lounge with complimentary computer use.

The varied events programme ranges from trips to places of historical interest to in-house concerts, receptions and art exhibitions. Members can keep up to date with League news through the quarterly magazine 'Overseas' which is mailed to each individual member and is also available on the League's website.

Members of diplomatic missions, Chambers of Commerce and several professional organisations can obtain a 50% discount on joining fees which for those living in Saudi Arabia would be GBP56 plus an annual subscription of GBP106. (From July 1st a half year subscription fee of GBP53 would apply) For those aged 17-25 the joining fee is waived and the annual subscription is GBP80 or GBP40 for half year.

For more information and an application form please visit www.rosl.org.uk or write to The Royal Over-Seas League, Park Place, St James's Street, London SW1 1LR Tel: (0)20 7408 0214 ext 214/216 email: info@rosl.org.uk or: rosliyadh@hotmail.com