

Buckingham Palace
on Thursday 27 August 2009

This visit has been organised by George Freeman.

Buckingham Palace serves as both the office and London residence of Her Majesty The Queen, and the administrative headquarters of the Royal Household. It is one of the few working royal palaces remaining in the world today.

Today the State Rooms are used extensively by The Queen and Members of the Royal Family to receive and entertain their guests on State, ceremonial and official occasions. During August and September when The Queen makes her annual visit to Scotland, the Palace's nineteen state rooms are open to visitors.

The State Rooms form the heart of the working palace and are lavishly furnished with some of the greatest treasures from the Royal Collection - paintings by Rembrandt, Rubens, Poussin and Canaletto; sculpture by Canova; exquisite examples of Sèvres porcelain; and some of the finest English and French furniture.

As part of the 2009 Summer Opening of the State Rooms, an exhibition of dresses, jewels, photographs, and gifts presented to Her Majesty by the people of the Commonwealth will be shown at Buckingham Palace. *Queen & Commonwealth: The Royal Tour* celebrates the 60th anniversary of the London Declaration of 1949, which recognised the British Sovereign as Head of the Commonwealth.

The Queen has travelled further than any other monarch in history and has made over 170 official visits to Commonwealth countries during her reign. The exhibition will represent six regions of the Commonwealth: Africa, Australia and New Zealand, Canada, The Caribbean and Central America, Asia (including India), Island Peoples and Pacific Realms. It will highlight The Queen's role at the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings, of which she has attended 32, and some particularly important inward State Visits from Commonwealth countries

The Royal Mews is one of the finest working stables in existence and home to the royal collection of historic coaches and carriages. Among the many coaches are the Glass Coach, used by royal brides, the Irish State Coach, used by the Queen for the State Opening of Parliament and the luxurious Australian State Coach, with central heating and electric windows. The most dazzling is the Gold State Coach, which has been used at every coronation since that of George IV in 1821.

The horses stabled at the mews are Windsor Greys and Cleveland Bays. As they may be on duty, undergoing training or having a deserved rest away from London, they are not always on view.

This visit by REMS to the State Apartments and the Mews is a Group Visit at a reduced rate. These are NOT guided tours but we go in together and walk round at our own rate depending on our own interests. Audio guides are available. Guide books available at £4.95 on day.

ASSEMBLE outside the Palace in Buckingham Gate (continuation of Buckingham Palace Road) near the Ambassador's Entrance (State Rooms) in the time zone marked 11.15 party.

The nearest stations are Victoria (toilets and refreshments) and St James Park.

When you have finished the tour please make your own way to lunch.

LUNCH I have booked tables in the restaurant of “The Albert”, corner of Buckingham Gate and Victoria Street. This is a table service, carvery with other food. You may wish to have a bar snack (on ground floor) or eat elsewhere, such as in the cafe of “House of Fraser” opposite or the sandwich bars along Victoria Street. Please indicate you if you wish to eat in the restaurant on the booking form so I can book the correct number of places. If anyone wishes to see the menu please ask george.freeman@physics.org

2 courses £14; 3 courses £18. Wine/beer & coffee extra.

COSTS £23, minimum 15. Several guests are allowed so that you may bring friends and family. All food extra. **NO CANCELLATIONS** after 24 July as we will be buying your tickets that week.

10.45 – 11.00	Assemble outside the Palace in the area zone for 11.15 group
11.15 – 13.00	Tour
13.00 – 13.15	Walk to The Albert
13.15 – 14.45	Lunch (& shopping?)
14.45 – 15.00	Walk to the Mews or reassemble there
15.00 – 16.30	Tour

CONTACTS

Before the meeting

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On the morning only George Freeman 07941 916 944

