

TWO QUIRKY LONDON VISITS IN JANUARY

1. THE JEWISH MUSEUM

We are arranging an outing on Thursday 3rd January to the Jewish Museum in Camden Town for a visit to their two new exhibitions, listen to a talk about the Jews' Free School (JFS) by one of our members, David Harris who was Deputy Head of the School and is a volunteer at the Museum. We will also have the opportunity to look at the permanent displays in the Museum.

We will arrive at the Museum at 10.30am and view the current special exhibitions. The first exhibition is "*Remembering the Kindertransport*". It marks the 80th anniversary of the Kindertransport, telling the story, in their own words, of six Jewish children who were rescued and brought to Britain. The second exhibition is "*Roman Vishniac Rediscovered*". Roman Vishniac was a documentary photographer whose diverse body of work covered five decades from the 1920s to the 1960s and includes some iconic photographs of eastern European Jewry.

At 11.30am David Harris will give us a talk on the history of JFS, the largest and oldest Jewish school in the UK. JFS can trace its origins to 1732 and in many ways is one of the most significant and influential institutions in the history and development of the Anglo-Jewish community. Originating in the East End, the School is now located in Kenton having made its way there via Camden Town. (A four sites saga, as David calls it.) David's talk will end at around noon and we will then be free to look at the rest of the museum whose collection tells the story of the history and heritage of Jews in Britain through themes of migration, family, faith and culture.

The Museum also has a café that you can take a break in. It serves light snacks including cakes, soup and bagels. The museum is fully accessible. Lifts serve all floors of the building and accessible toilets are available on all floors.

The price for admission is £5 per person assuming there are at least 10 paying concession adults in our group. (It will cost £6.50 each if there are fewer than 10.) Entry is free for those with an Art Fund pass. Payment arrangements, where relevant, will be advised.

We plan to meet at Preston Road Station at 9.45am and travel down together to Camden Town Underground Station, via the Metropolitan and Northern Lines, from where it is a 3 minute walk to the Museum. We will provide more details about the travel arrangements nearer the time. After the visit people will be free to make their own way home or to linger in Camden Town, where there are many cafes and pubs.

Please contact Louise Bennett on louisebennett@btinternet.com or 020 8907 2060 if you would like to come - including indicating if you have an Art Fund pass - or for more information.

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2. SOMERSET HOUSE

We are organising a private tour of Somerset House on the Strand on the morning of Friday 18 January 2019.

Our tour will last about 60 minutes and introduce the history of this magnificent 18th century building from Tudor intrigue to Georgian enlightenment. Our guide will lead the group through:

- Lightwells - an atmospheric architectural feature below the level of and encompassing the courtyard. It has been used in films and TV programmes to represent a Victorian street location.
- Deadhouse - a resting place for artefacts from the Royal Chapel.
- The Nelson Stairs - a spectacular cantilever staircase leading to rooms once used by the Navy Board and the Admiralty.
- The Stamp Stairs where we will hear about the Stamp Office - the beginnings of the Inland Revenue.
- The Fountain Court and the surrounding wings of Somerset House designed as the first government office block housing the Navy Board, the Admiralty and various learned societies of the day.
- The River Terrace where we will hear about the construction of Victoria Embankment.
- The Strand Vestibule - an elegant solution to a narrow entrance problem.
- The Great Arch entrance - once the river entrance to Somerset House.

Please note that this is a walking tour with no places to sit along the way. There are some areas such as the Lightwells and the courtyard that are cobbled which may cause difficulties for some with mobility issues.

The price is just £6.50. Louise will collect the admission charge prior to our visit. Payment arrangements will be advised.

We plan to meet at Preston Road Station at 10.30am and travel by train from there to Charing Cross Station, from where it is short walk to Somerset House. Afterwards people may like to have lunch together in Somerset House or in one of the many nearby pubs and cafes.

Please contact Louise Bennett on louisebennett@btinternet.com or 020 8907 2060 if you would like to come or for more information.