

ROYAL INVITATION TO TEA

Each year, one of the highlights of the Royal summer calendar is the garden parties given by The Queen. These take place at Buckingham Palace and the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh. Invitations are sent out by the Lord Chamberlain on behalf of The Queen, all the arrangements are planned by the Lord Chamberlain's Office. Around 8,000 guests from all walks of life attend each garden party and this year Alan Parker, Master of The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers, together with his wife Christine, were invited to attend one of the Garden Parties.

Alan said: "Complete with Morning Coat and Green X label in the bottom left hand corner of my taxi windscreen, I was ushered onto the Bridle Path in Constitutional Hill by a policeman. "Just dropping off, Sir?" he asked. "No, going in for tea!" I replied. "Straight down and park on the left," he instructed. "Thanks for your help," I replied.

"What an afternoon we enjoyed. The sun shone and as the Bands played, Her Majesty came out and joined us for tea on the lawn. Finger sandwiches, little cakes which were



delicious, together with iced drinks and then later ice cream was served. This was a real piece of English tradition – long may our Country remain the World leader in yet another field of excellence, Afternoon Tea. And there is no better venue than Buckingham Palace!

"Being Master has enabled me to experience a series of events normally out of reach to most; Afternoon Tea at The Queen's Request has to be one of the highlights, thank you, Your Majesty."

Since the 1860's, Royal Garden Parties have been held at Buckingham Palace. In some years, The Queen gives an additional Royal Garden Party to honour a large national organisation celebrating a special anniversary, such as the Red Cross or, for example, to mark the Year of the Disabled. In 1997 The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh hosted a Royal Garden Party for couples sharing their Golden Wedding anniversary (50 years) with them. In 1998, a special Royal Garden Party celebrated the 50th anniversary of the founding of the National Health Service: the guests were serving or past-serving members from all parts of the Health service.

COMMITTEE ENJOYS SEASIDE VISIT

The Education Committee of The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers hold regular meetings throughout the year. But they felt a change of scenery would be good when holding the meetings. So the latest meeting moved down on the coast, at Leigh on Sea. Course Organiser of the Company's Cab Guide Course, Graham Woodhouse, said "This is how a proper committee meeting should be held!" Perhaps he is a little biased being a resident of the seaside town!

Following the main business being discussed, the committee retired to the sea front for some cockles and a pint... this was followed by jellied eels. A splendid time was had by all and they are now looking forward to the next get together which will be at Ronnie Scotts.



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