

news release



**Blenheim Palace**  
Woodstock  
Oxfordshire  
OX20 1PX

February 2010

- **New Themed Tours Available in 2010**

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Guided tours are a highlight of a visit to Blenheim Palace, and with the extended series of special interest talks and tours now available, there is even more to discover at Britain's Greatest Palace in 2010.

Over the last 300 years the famous and infamous have visited and lived in this magnificent ancestral home of the Dukes of Marlborough, set within glorious parkland and Formal Gardens. The themed tours look at some of the personalities, periods and significant developments in more detail including two new themed tours.

**New**

**The Gentlemen of Blenheim Palace - October 14th**

*Led by Karen Wiseman/Antonia Keaney*

Eleven Dukes of Marlborough - all of them with a fascinating story to tell. This tour will give you a personal, and sometimes surprising, glimpse into the fortunes of the Gentlemen of Blenheim. Saints and sinners, soldiers and scientists, Blenheim Palace has been home to them all and each has found a unique way to protect and maintain their beloved Palace.

**New**

**Behind the Scenes at Blenheim Palace - May 13th**

*Led by Karen Wiseman/Antonia Keaney*

This talk will give a glimpse into the life and work at Britain's Greatest Palace. Behind the scenes there is a small army of people all of whom help run, restore, preserve and maintain the Palace. On any day you may find in some corner of the Undercroft Chris, Head of Maintenance with Paul the Palace electrician. Elsewhere you may find Mick the carpenter or John the horologist. Outside you may meet Chris the butterfly man or Harry the Palace Exterminator, who is always accompanied by his four very enthusiastic Jack Russell's. Keeping an eye on everything is Heather the Head of Operations who last year became an expert on marriage proposals!

### **A Walk in the Past - The Park and Gardens at Blenheim Palace - April 15<sup>th</sup> & Sept 30<sup>th</sup>**

*Led by Karen Wiseman/Antonia Keaney*

This historical garden tour will take you out and about around the Palace grounds. The tour will concentrate on the way the Park and Formal Gardens have changed over time and give insights into the colourful characters that shaped the Palace landscape. The talk will start with the medieval landscape and then move on to the endeavours of Henry Wise and 'Capability' Brown. The tour continues into the 20th Century with the Water Terraces of Achille Duchene and then finishes with the delights of the Secret Garden. Bring comfortable shoes, an umbrella and a water proof jacket to ensure the sun shines!

### **A Palace at War - Evacuees and Espionage - November 4<sup>th</sup>**

*Led by Karen Wiseman/Antonia Keaney*

The Marlborough family, Estate staff and the Palace itself played a full and energetic part in the war effort. This talk and tour tells the story of how the Palace prepared for the worst, survived the onslaught of 400 boys evacuated to Blenheim and kept the secrets of MI5. The talk will introduce visitors to such characters as the 10<sup>th</sup> Duchess, Mr. Sacre (land agent, ARP Warden and member of the Home Guard), and the PE teacher who was a conscientious objector. Photographs of Malvern College at Blenheim will be on display throughout the Palace during the tour so visitors can see as well as hear how the boys lived and learned.

## **The Unknown Winston - March 11th**

*Led by Karen Wiseman/Antonia Kearney*

The private resources of Blenheim Palace are drawn upon to afford very new and refreshing insights into this remarkable man. We examine the breadth of talent, achievement and personality of the “Greatest Briton”: soldier, politician, statesman, painter, writer, orator, family man - and bricklayer!

## **The Ladies of Blenheim Palace - July 8<sup>th</sup>**

*Led by Karen Wiseman/Antonia Kearney*

A fascinating and entertaining look at the ladies of the Marlborough/Churchill family usually overlooked in favour of the men. This talk and tour redresses the balance as it looks at the achievement of some of the Duchesses and discusses the thwarted talents and potential of others.

### **Details and booking procedure**

Each day begins at 10.30am with coffee and biscuits in the Palace’s Indian Room. The talk commences at 11am, followed by a tour of the Palace and/Gardens at 11.30am led by the specialist. The tour finishes at 12.30pm and you are free to spend the rest of the day in the Palace and grounds.

For further information details of booking and prices please call 01993 811091 to book or email [operations@blenheimpalace.com](mailto:operations@blenheimpalace.com).

For more information visit [www.blenheimpalace.com](http://www.blenheimpalace.com)

or call 0800 849 6500 (24 hour recorded information)

### **Notes to Editors**

	Individuals	Friends & Annual Pass
Adult	£22.50***	£4.50**
Concessions	£19.00***	£4.50**
Child	£14.50***	£4.50**

\*\*\* includes Palace Entry

\*\* 'Friends' and Annual Pass cards must be produced

- **An Audio Garden Tour** is also available throughout the season, with commentary from the Palace experts offering visitors the opportunity to take in the wonders of the Park and Formal Gardens at their own pace. Audio Tours can be pre-booked by calling 01993 811091  
*Maximum of 15 handsets available.*
- Blenheim Palace and Formal Gardens open from 13<sup>th</sup> February to 12<sup>th</sup> December 2010.
- The Palace and Formal Gardens are closed on Mondays and Tuesdays in November and December. The Park is open daily except Christmas Day
- The Park opens at 9am, the Formal Gardens at 10am and the Palace and Pleasure Gardens from 10.30am. (NB - The Pleasure Gardens normally open at 10am and 10.30am later in the season)
- Last admission to the Palace and Gardens is 4.45pm. The Palace and Pleasure Gardens\* close at 5.30pm and the Park at 6pm.

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For further information about Blenheim Palace please call the 24 hour information line on 0800 849 6500 or visit the website at [www.blenheimpalace.com](http://www.blenheimpalace.com) for media information contact: Blenheim Palace Marketing Department Telephone: +44 (0) 1993 810510 Email: [marketing@blenheimpalace.com](mailto:marketing@blenheimpalace.com)

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