

St George IN SOUTHWARK FESTIVAL



April 2008
Festival Report

Southwark has many reasons to celebrate St George, both as patron saint of England and as patron of many of the diverse communities now belonging to the borough.

St George the Martyr Church



Henry V came here to pray after his victory at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415 and declared 23 April to be a public holiday.

St George as Patron saint

St George is patron of many countries, regions and cities. He is also patron of many trades and professions.

St George's Day is 23 April. This is also the birth and deathday of William Shakespeare who is celebrated at the Globe on Bankside and Southwark Cathedral. It is further celebrated as World Book Day.

The St George in Southwark Festival aims to bring together groups who already celebrate St George's Day and Shakespeare's birthday and to promote further events to develop community life in the Bankside and north Southwark area.

The 2008 Festival

The Ballad of St George & the Dragon



On St George's Day itself local theatre group the Lions part gave three highly enjoyable performances of their specially written Ballad of St George & the Dragon, the first in Red Cross Garden, the second in Borough Market and the third at the meeting of the Borough & Bankside Community Council. Each performance had a different audience.

The Great Southwark Dragon Quest



The Southwark Mysteries and Mental Fight Club combined to run their popular Dragon Quest on the mornings of Saturday and Sunday. Dragon hunters gathered in Red Cross garden in Redcross way and began to search for the many dragons to be found, while learning about the folklore and mythology of dragons and the stories of St George. They ended at St George's Garden where the dragon danced.

Southwark, Shakespeare and St George Lecture

Local resident and actor Robert Pennant-Jones skilfully linked the three themes together with the help of RSC actors Michael Burrell and Richard Earthy for a rehearsed reading of Henry IV part II and helped by the audience in 'Cry God for Harry, England and St George!'

St George the Martyr Church

On Saturday Stephen Humphrey of the Southwark Local Studies Library gave a talk about the history of the church and on Sunday Fr Ray Andrews presided at a Festival Eucharist.

St George's RC Cathedral



As well as two guided tours and a special Mass for St George's day the cathedral showed a new painting by Scott Norwood Witts of St George and the Dead Soldier – a contemporary meditation on St George and nationalism.

Southwark Cathedral

To celebrate another of the borough's literary connections, Arthur Smith and Rick Jones commemorated the 600th anniversary of the death of poet John Gower who is buried in the cathedral.

Local History Library



Southwark Local History Library prepared a display of St George places in Southwark and the Children's Library hosted two sessions for schools with story telling and music from the folk tradition of England by the Askew sisters.

Blackfriars Settlement



Blackfriars hosted a traditional Sunday Lunch, a St George's day lunch and quiz and a Community Lunch with International Tea Dance, enjoyed by members of the Blackfriars Seniors and Crusoe club for the visually impaired and local residents.

With thanks to

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Building on your giving

Southwark Neighbourhood Renewal
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Dates for 2009

Thursday 23-Sunday 26 April

www.stgeorgefestival.org.uk

To participate email
info@stgeorgefestival.org.uk