

St George
IN SOUTHWARK
FESTIVAL



April 2009
Festival Report

What is the Festival about?

At the opening event of this year's festival Fr Ray Andrews of St George the Martyr Church led a meditation on St George and Englishness.

St George offers to us:

- the appreciation of England and things English
- the rich symbolism of the stories and legends that have attached themselves to his name
- his embodiment of faith and courage



St George was a Turkish national: he spent half his life in Palestine and he served in the Roman army. We share his patronage with more countries than any other saint in the calendar, all over Europe and beyond.

The Ballad of St George & the Dragon



The energetic Lions part players gave four performances around the Borough. Surprised people came to doorways in Rushworth Street as the drums and violin heralded their arrival at Blackfriars Settlement. Here 60 or so 'older people', friends and neighbours, after a good roast beef lunch washed down with



St George's beer from Ethiopia, watched as St George tackled the dragon for the first time and the spring princess was released from his belly.

Then a short walk to Red Cross Garden, filled with families and children, just out of school, for two more performances - here the small boys learnt to encourage the dragon. Finally a procession gathered people as it went to Southwark Cathedral, where tourists, visitors and office workers cheered on St George and goodwill spread around.

Cross Bones Graveyard



Local poet John Constable led a large crowd in remembering the 'outcast poor' at the gates of the graveyard in Redcross Way. Guests included Val Shawcross AM and Cllr Nick Stanton.

Festival Competition



A new feature of the festival: a competition for all ages on the theme of Courage. Art works, poems and a short story all won prizes.

St George's Cathedral tours



Guided tours of St George's RC Cathedral were offered on St George's Day.

International Picnic



This event was held in the Crypt of St George's church. Dancing and music were provided by the Peckham-based Moving Into Age group and the Rockingham Somali Ladies. An Ethiopian coffee ceremony was performed by ladies from Walworth Road. Bankside Open Spaces Trust offered snapdragons to plant and many iced their own St George's cake.

St George Lunches

Blackfriars Settlement held two lunches: one on St George's Day and another on the following Sunday.

New Community Space

On Sunday Bishop Tom Butler of Southwark blessed the new Community Space in St George's

Crypt, followed by another celebration lunch.

Other events

Other events which took place as part of the festival were a Silver evening bike ride with a St George theme led by Southwark Cyclists, Story Telling by Vayu Naidu on Heroes & Tricksters and morris dancing by New Esperance Morris and Old Palace Clog around pubs in the Borough Market.

Thanks to

Southwark Council, Southwark Chamber of Commerce and St George's United Charities for funding.



Southwark
Chamber of Commerce

Dates for 2010

Thursday 22 – Sunday 25 April
www.stgeorgefestival.org.uk

To participate email
info@stgeorgefestival.org.uk

Cover picture shows fridge magnet on sale at Southwark Cathedral shop.