

London Evening Standard



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Londoner's Diary

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Newspaper diary of the year
 Edited by Joy Lo Dico

Pride of the West End

ACTRESS Hayley Atwell, right, who is starring in a revival of *The Pride at Trafalgar Studios*, is having a good run. The play, first written about attitudes to homosexuality, has received supportive reviews and, even though it was written five years ago, is keeping up with the times. Atwell and her co-stars use the nightly curtain call to display placards saying "To Russia with Love" – protesting against Russia's clampdown on gay rights.



REX FEATURES/CAN NGUYEN

Beatrice pipes up for orphans

PRINCESS Beatrice is to be patron of a new school for orphans in Ethiopia. St George's School, at Azezo near Gondar, will open in November with 100 pupils, initially of five- and six-year-olds. The scheme, known as Broomwood in Ethiopia, is modelled on Broomwood Hall prep and pre-prep school set up in Wandsworth by Katharine Colquhoun 29 years ago. Lady Colquhoun and her husband Sir Malcolm Colquhoun of Luss discussed their plans last night at a garden party in Nightingale Lane for her original parents and pupils. Some wanted to know whether St George's would follow the Broomwood ethos with Colquhoun tartan and Mr Malcolm Innes playing bagpipes on St Andrew's Day. "We're not allowed to export our culture," Katharine told me.

Mail critic puts down his pen

IT'S all change among the old guard of veteran film critics. First the Observer's Philip French stepped down after half a century and now the Daily Mail's Christopher Tookey is joining him. But Tookey's colleagues are hoping he isn't planning to use his newly free hours to plot his return to the West End. In 2000 Tookey flirted with hubris when he wrote, produced and directed a musical – an adaptation of Charles Dickens's *Hard Times* – which The Stage politely described as an "overlong mixture of music hall, circus and the kind of British musical that fell out of fashion in the Seventies".

■ NO SUBJECT is too popular for the London Review of Books. First it was Hilary Mantel on Kate Middleton; now it's the novelist Jenny Diski unexpectedly leaping to the defence of provocative Daily Mail columnist Liz Jones. Why is it, Diski asks, that Stephen Fry is applauded for speaking out about his suicide attempt but Jones is witch-hunted for wishing herself dead? What the Londoner wants to know is if Jones herself will soon be appearing in the esteemed literary journal.

Celebrate the river (southside is best)

SIMON Hughes, deputy leader of the Lib-Dems, launched The Mayor's Thames Festival 2013 at a reception on the South Bank last night, promising 10 days of ambitious river-focused celebrations. "People cross the Thames but don't appreciate it, so we decided to make them understand how fundamental it is to how the city works," he said. The festival will include an exhibition of 130 specially-

commissioned films on those who live, work and play on the Thames as well as an orchestral performance of steamship horns. Hughes is the MP for Bermondsey and Old Southwark and expressed his love of his area but conceded that those north of the river might wish to explore the festival. "There are tribes found north – but the south is of course the elite part of the city."

■ LEGENDARY photographer Patrick Demarcheller was honoured at the US Style Awards last night. US Vogue editor Anna Wintour recalled meeting him in the Seventies: "I was a junior editor and totally in awe of you. I was also, to be honest, not always sure what you were saying. I've always felt really bad about this until a French editor told me, 'It's OK, I'm French, and I don't understand a word he says either'."

Strictly not going dancing

JULIEN Macdonald might have signed up for *Strictly Come Dancing* but fellow designer Matthew Williamson won't be joining the sequin brigade. "I love dancing," said Williamson, pictured with models Mollie Smith and Sarah Ann Macklin at last night's Hand to Earth exhibition at Scream gallery in Fitzrovia.

"But there's no need for my dancing to be broadcast to the nation." The exhibition includes work by Shane McAdams, who worked on Williamson's spring/summer 2013 collection.



DAVE BERTIT



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