

## Key anniversaries and what's new

### Key anniversaries and events:

- ◆ 2009 celebrates the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Henry VIII's ascension to the throne
- ◆ 2009 celebrates the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin
- ◆ 2009 celebrates the centenary of Louis Blériot's epic flight over the English Channel
- ◆ 2009 celebrates the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 'Royal' prefix given to Royal Tunbridge Wells by Edward VIII
- ◆ 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Charles Dickens writing David Copperfield
- ◆ 2011 - The British Open returns to Kent
- ◆ 2011 . Folkestone's 2<sup>nd</sup> Triennial
- ◆ 2012 celebrates the bicentenary of the birth of Charles Dickens
- ◆ 2012 the Olympics come to London

### What's new for 2009?

- ◆ New international station at Ebbsfleet (Eurostar)
- ◆ **Southeastern's** new high speed rail link from London (from December 2009)
- ◆ English Heritage is celebrating the importance of Charles Darwin and **Down House** in 2009 to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Darwin's birth and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of *On the Origin of Species*, by providing an exciting new interpretation scheme for visitors. From 13 February 2009, a new exhibition suite and exciting new technology will be lifting the lid on Charles Darwin's life, research and theories during his time at Down House. A new handheld multimedia tour, displays of previously unseen original objects, and exciting online developments are central to major improvements marking two important milestones for Darwin and his work in 2009.
- ◆ The Keep at **Dover Castle** is to undergo a major transformation over 2008-09, to be renamed The Great Tower. Situated at the heart of the castle, the Keep was built for Henry II's court to accommodate and entertain important guests and is one of the largest and most elaborate keeps ever constructed. The current exhibition will be replaced by a new experience that will evoke the court of Henry II during the 1180s and explore the fascinating dynastic struggles of the Angevin empire.

- ◆ Completed restoration of the historic landscape of **Cobham Park** - part of one of Kent's great estates and the setting for the Elizabethan mansion home of the Earl of Darnley. The National Trust is taking on ownership and management of the site.
- ◆ Opening of Gravesend new **Sikh Temple** (Gurdwara) in April 2009. The temple will be the biggest in the country
- ◆ New visitor facilities at **Scotney Castle**, including a tea-room
- ◆ England's first Magic Factory opens at **The Hop Farm Family Park**. This magical attraction reveals the secrets of some of the most dazzling tricks around including levitation, the floating head, the mirrored maze, the mind-boggling trommel and the disappearing act. The Hop Farm will also be home to the country's largest Victorian Carousel.
- ◆ New restaurant at **Chapel Down**. one of the country's finest and most respected chefs has teamed up with England's premier wine maker. Richard Phillips at Chapel Down is a truly inspiring dining experience in stunning surroundings promising the finest wines from England and abroad and the very finest cuisine.
- ◆ New visitor interpretation at **Rochester Cathedral**. 2009 will see the introduction of a new multi-layered audio guide aimed to reach a broad spectrum of visitors and translated into a number of languages. The Audio Guide will also have a hand held PDA with a signed version of the tours. This will work in tandem with an Audio Visual element which is currently in development. Alongside this will be introduced new interpretive panels and new literature all designed to improve the visitor experience and communicate the beautiful building to its visitors. All the new interpretation will be designed with 3 storylines . a Family oriented theme, a spiritual theme, and a more general approach.
- ◆ New Coach Park and visitor welcome facilities in **Canterbury**. The new coach park will be on the site of the existing St John's car park and will mean that visitors arrive closer to the heart of the city.
- ◆ BBC Documentary on the farm project at **Sissinghurst Castle Garden** . will explore the journey that the donor family and the National Trust have undergone so far to restore the land surrounding the world-famous garden to a working farm which will supply the National Trust restaurant on site. With the vegetable garden already complete, the farmer and live stock are due by the end of 2009.
- ◆ **Penshurst Place** is embarking on a restoration project on the double herbaceous border over the next 2 years . with internationally renowned garden designer George

Carter. There will also be new planting in the Heraldic Garden and a new sculpture by Robert Rattray in the Demi Lune to commemorate the birth year of the late Lord De Lisle in May 2009. The theme of the sculpture is on the poetry of Sir Philip Sidney *He who shoots at the midday sun shall be sure he never hit the mark; yet as sure as he is he shall shoot higher than who aims at a bush.*

- ◆ The rock garden at **Doddington Place Gardens**, originally laid out just before the First World War has been completely rebuilt and renovated. More than 500 tons of rocks have been moved and it has been planted up with thousands of plants. The series of descending pools have been restored and in addition there is a new viewing area over the largest pool.
- ◆ The Tenterden Gateway is due to open on the 8 Dec 2008 - first ever rural gateway and will include the following services - Tenterden Library, post office, Ashford Borough Council, Gateway services and Visitor Information Services. Now Tenterden will have all year round tourist information instead of a five month of the year seasonal service.
- ◆ New Holiday Inn Express in Thanet (near Ramsgate) - 105 bedrooms and 3 conference rooms.