

# **Buckingham Palace - Tea Party 23rd July 2007**

The Lincolnshire Centre was represented by Geoff & Gina Mercer (Chairman), and the following members were also present, Dave & Jean Fergie, Dawn & Wayne Kirman John & Helen Ingham, Humphrey & Josie Wragg, David & Barbara Clay And Mick & Mandy Smith

You arrived at the Palace through the Main gate which is situated at the front of the building, with bemused tourists on-looking. Once greeted by a member of the Metropolitan Police who checked your identification it was through one of the many archways you enter the Main Courtyard. Crossing the courtyard you got an appreciation for the size and grandeur of this magnificent building.

Once across the Courtyard you entered the Main house where you are guided through the hallways passing through the lavishly decorated State rooms used for receiving guests, official dinners, banquets and receptions. Also you saw some of the greatest treasures from the Royal Collection held in trust for the nation - landscapes and portraits painted by Rembrandt, Rubens, Poussin, van Dyck, Canaletto, Laurence; sculpture by Canova; exquisite examples of Sèvres porcelain; horological masterpieces and some of the finest English and French furniture. All have been acquired over four centuries by Britain's monarchs. Eventually we exited the Palace from the rear of the building and were greeted with a fantastic view of the Palace Gardens from the top of the rear Terrace.

All guests had full access to the whole 20 Hectares of gardens in total, where you were invited to wonder around the many different areas, walking through the Rose garden with its full aroma, the walled garden & the lake at the foot of the garden which was spectacular. In one secluded area there was a wonderful summerhouse which even had a dog's water bowl inside. Looking back you could see the rarely seen views of architect Nash's west facade of the palace.

In opposite corners of the garden were two military bands which played in turn, once one had finished playing it would lower a flag and the other would raise its flag and continue on with the music.

To one side there was a large marquee which served afternoon tea throughout the whole event and opposite was the Royal Tea Tent. HRH Prince Philip arrived from the Palace Terrace onto the lawn guarded by the Yeoman Warders or Beefeaters which were dressed in their scarlet and gold dress uniforms which date from 1552 and are worn for state occasions. Once His Royal Highness had strolled through the many people who were invited he took his place in the Royal Tea tent. At the end of the afternoon you were invited to exit the Palace through the charmingly understated Bow Room, where you could admire the collection of porcelain from Chelsea Pottery.