

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**THE DUKE & DUCHESS OF WINDSOR SOCIETY
FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
FEATURING NOTED BRITISH HISTORIAN HUGO VICKERS**

The Duke & Duchess of Windsor Society announces its first conference to be held at the Hotel del Coronado in San Diego, California October 16-19, 2009 and will feature noted British historian and biographer, Hugo Vickers.

PALM DESERT, CA — The 20-year old Duke & Duchess of Windsor Society has members from around the world who are dedicated to recording and recognizing the historical importance of the lives of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor.

“We are very privileged to have one of **the foremost British royal historians/biographers Hugo Vickers** as both a member of our Society as well as featured speaker for our first Conference,” says Duke & Duchess of Windsor Society Conference producer, Mark Gaulding. Mr. Vickers is author of *The Private World of the Duke & Duchess of Windsor* and 18 other biographies about leading twentieth century figures and royal family members including Gladys, Duchess of Marlborough; Cecil Beaton; Vivien Leigh; and Greta Garbo. He is currently working on a new biography about the Duchess of Windsor titled *Behind Closed Doors: The Life and Death of the Duchess of Windsor* which is to be published in 2010.

"The Abdication remains an extraordinary mystery? Was it the great love story of the 20th century? Or something else. What man ever gave up so much for one woman? I am excited to be giving my version - based on close study for over 40 years!" says Hugo.

In addition to his book about the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, he has written several other biographies about the British Royal Family. His latest work is *Elizabeth, The Queen Mother*, the first major biography since her death. Prior to that he also wrote the authorized biography of Princess Alice, mother of the Duke of Edinburgh, for which he interviewed several members of the royal family.

He has served as Literary Executor for Sir Cecil Beaton's estate since 1987.

Mr. Vickers is a frequent broadcaster, and is much in demand for royal topics. He is a frequent guest on CNN's Larry King Live, and also on Fox TV, NSNBC. Mr. Vickers also conducts lectures throughout the world.

A book signing will follow Mr. Vickers' lecture. (<http://www.hugovickers.co.uk/>)

The conference will also feature three additional guest speakers:

• **Reverend James Leo** who is the former dean of the American Cathedral in Paris and who was the Duchess of Windsor's vicar in the final years of her life. He attended her at her death and provided services for her burial at Frogmore in Windsor Park. Dean Leo is the author of the recently published autobiography titled, *Exits and Entrances*, which includes his time with the Duchess of Windsor in Paris. A book-signing will follow Dean Leo's lecture.

• **Richard Rene Silvin** was the Hospital Administrator at the American Hospital of Paris in the early 70s and the Duchess was on the hospital's Board of Governors. The two enjoyed a friendship and the Duchess acted as a mentor to the young Silvin. Mr. Silvin is currently writing a memoir titled *Noblesse Oblige, the Duchess of Windsor as I Knew Her*. Mr. Silvin has previously written two other memoirs: *Walking the Rainbow* and *I Survived Swiss Boarding Schools*.

• South African-based playwright and actress, **Lena Farugia**, will be performing select scenes from her play, UNTITLED, about the Duchess of Windsor which was recently staged at the Finborough Theater in London and starred noted British actors Nichola McAuliffe (recently seen in *Cheri*, the film with Michelle Pfeiffer) and Patrick Ryecart.

Ms. Farugia will conduct a question and answer session the following day about the play which she originally wrote and performed throughout South Africa in the early '90s. Joining Farugia, in the role of the butler, will be her husband, South African film producer and director, Robert Davies.

The actress has appeared in such motion pictures as: *The Gods Must Be Crazy II*, *The Sandgrass People*. Her work in South African and Canadian television includes: The 26-part series *Westgate* (lead); teleplay of Chekhov's *The Bear* (female lead); Three-part mini-series *The Fiddler* (female lead). Other television appearances include series such as: 'Tarzan: The Epic Adventures,' 'Tropical Heat,' 'Edgar Allen Poe: Tales of Mystery and Imagination' and most recently, 'Diamonds' with Derek Jacobi and Judy Davis.

Lena has been the recipient of two awards and six nominations for 'Best Actress' as well as pursuing her career as an award winning filmmaker and writer. She has either directed, written or produced over sixty television dramas, documentaries and talk shows. This body of work includes co-producing and editing the award winning feature film version of *Saturday Night at the Palace*, one of the first anti-apartheid feature films made in South Africa as well as producing or co-writing television productions with the internationally renowned political satirist Pieter-Dirk Uys.

Event producer Mark Gauling says, "This is really very exciting to have such an esteemed line up of speakers for such a great weekend in one of the most beautiful resort settings in the world, the Hotel del Coronado."

“San Diego has a rich Wallis heritage. Which is why we are having our first conference here,” continues Mark. “What people should recognize is that the abdication of King Edward VIII changed history. What many may not realize today is that Queen Elizabeth II has had a glorious reign of so many years as a direct result of her uncle King Edward VIII’s decision in 1936 to abdicate in favor of his younger brother, King George VI, the queen’s father. More recently, history was made again when Prince Charles, Edward’s successor to the Prince of Wales’ title, was allowed to do that which was refused his great uncle in 1936: marry his mistress, a divorced woman, and the woman he loved.”

The Windsor’s story is one of the more complex stories in history and today continues to enthrall newer generations. It was reported recently in the Daily Mail that Madonna is working on film about the king and Mrs. Simpson that she will star in.

(<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-1146642/Madonna-star-American-mistress-Prince-Wales.html>)

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In addition to the exciting line up of distinguished speakers, the conference will also focus on the period of time when the Duchess of Windsor lived in Coronado and San Diego and will include the materials of noted historian, **Benjamin Sacks, PhD**, who was frequent contributor to the San Historical Society and other local magazines and newspapers. It was during this time that a young Edward, Prince of Wales visited San Diego on one of his many world tours during the ‘20s and early ‘30s. There will also be a tour of San Diego/Coronado homes where Wallis once resided.

The conference will be held at the Hotel del Coronado. Non-members may attend the event with advanced reservations and by paying the conference/meal fees.

An additional presentation and book-signing will be held by Mr. Vickers and will be geared for the general public. (A separate press release will be made about this event).

For more information please visit the Duke & Duchess of Windsor Society’s website at www.ddows.org. A press kit is available upon request.

Information

Reservations required.

When: Friday-Monday
October 16-19, 2009
Activities throughout the day including lunch
Cocktail/Dinner Saturday night

Conference Fees Conference and Meal Fee for non-members. Meals include two lunches, a cocktail and seated dinner Saturday night as well as refreshments throughout the

day sessions. *Advance reservations are required.*

Contact: Call (760) 574-7825 for information and reservations
or visit www.ddows.org for more information or
email: mark@ddows.org

Where: Hotel del Coronado, San Diego, CA
<http://www.hoteldel.com>

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The Duke & Duchess of Windsor Society is a group of individuals from around the world who are dedicated to recognizing and recording the historical significance of the Duke & Duchess of Windsor. The organization commemorates its 20th anniversary this year. Membership is made up of Windsor-philes from the United States, Canada, England, Scotland, France, Germany, Italy, Australia, Russia and South Africa. We have members in their early twenties to octogenarians, which proves that the enigmatic story of the life of the Duke & Duchess of Windsor transcends generations and ages. This organization is founded upon member participation and interest, which is collectively focused in a quarterly journal.

This conference will launch a series of future conferences at Windsor-haunts, such as: Washington DC/Maryland/Virginia area, New York, UK (including London), France (including Paris), Palm Beach, Nassau, and an Atlantic Crossing and others.

For more information about the organization and the conference, or to make reservations, visit: www.ddows.org.