

World's only marching Military Steel Orchestra comes to Royal Tattoo

Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force Steel Orchestra step foot in England for the very first time!

The World's only Military Steel Orchestra will give the Royal Tattoo at Windsor Castle (13-16th May) a Caribbean vibe, when it's 40 person band of musicians and dancers arrives in England for the first time.

Formed in June 1995, the Orchestra has quickly become a Caribbean sound sensation, performing all over the world, and even playing as part of the National contingent at the FIFA World Cup in Germany and the 25th year of Independence in Antigua in 2006.

The band's musicians are active soldiers, forming part of a Defence Force called the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment. As one of the largest military forces in the region, the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment has approximately 3000 soldiers (men and women), split into four battalions.

The Regiment's primary role is to maintain the internal security of Trinidad and Tobago and assist with law enforcement. It is also one of the main units used in peacekeeping and humanitarian situations in the Caribbean region, most recently in Grenada following the destruction by Hurricane Ivan.

Led by Major Roger Best (Officer in Charge) and Warrant Officer 2 Robert Tobitt (Manager and musical arranger) the band arrives at Gatwick on 8th May, before settling into rehearsals at Windsor for the Royal Tattoo.

Simon Brooks-Ward, Royal Tattoo Event Director said: "It's a tremendous privilege to welcome the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force Steel Orchestra to the Tattoo and to England! Their uniqueness of sound will bring a modern element to the Tattoo, but their history in the Forces determines what this event is all about - showing the life of service men and women across the world."

Major Roger Best added; "We're very honoured to have been invited to play at the Royal Tattoo. We've been to New York, Sydney, Scotland and Washington but have never been to England - and to play in front of Her Majesty the Queen is the biggest honour of all."

As part of the band's rehearsals and the event's promotion, the public will also get the chance to see the Orchestra performing at other locations in the South, ahead of the Tattoo's opening night. (List of locations listed in full below).

In only its second year, the Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo, a not-for-profit event supporting the Royal British Legion, is shaping to be one of the highlights of the International Tattoo calendar. With over 400 musicians and pipers and support from all three services, the Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo is there to serve and celebrate the endeavours of our soldiers, sailors and airmen.

Ticket Information:

Tickets for the Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo 2009 are on sale now priced at £15, £25, £35, £45 and £60. They can be purchased by telephoning the box office on 0871 230 5570, or booked online via the website at www.windsortattoo.com. Tickets can also be purchased through Windsor Information Centre with discounts available for Advantage Card Holders. Please contact the centre on 01753 743907 for full details.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors:

The Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force Steel Orchestra will be playing at various locations ahead of the Tattoo as follows:

Sat 9th May - Ascot Racecourse and Windsor Town Centre

Sun 10th May - The Oracle, Reading and Market Square, Basingstoke town centre

Mon 11th May – Windsor Town Centre (afternoon) Windsor Racecourse (eve)

About the Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo:

The Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo is supported by BAE Systems, Compass and Land Rover. This not-for-profit event launched in May 2008 and was devised with the aim of raising public awareness of the wide contribution to security that the Armed Forces deliver and the value and standards that it maintains. It also raises funds to support individual soldiers, and their dependants, who have served and are serving on demanding current operations, such as in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Last year's Tattoo attracted over 18,000 spectators and this year's event will cater for nearly 30,000 visitors in total. The Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo includes ceremonial displays and bands, but also demonstrates the reality of modern day soldiering through arena action displays. The Tattoo was broadcasted in 2008 by the BBC.

About The Royal British Legion:

The Royal British Legion provides financial, social and emotional support to millions who have served and are currently serving in the Armed Forces, and their dependants. Currently, nearly 10.5 million people are eligible for our support and we receive thousands of calls for help every year.

The Legion was founded in 1921 as a voice for the ex-Service community and over 380,000 members continue to ensure that this voice does not go unheard. Although the needs of ex-Service people have changed over the years, we are still there to safeguard their welfare, interests and memory. British service people are in action around the world every day of the year. They know that if they need our support - now or in the future - the Legion is always on active duty for them.

About the Organisers:

The HPower Group produce, manage and promote large scale public events worldwide specialising in equestrian competitions, ceremonial events and public entertainment.

The HPower Group is the organiser of the Royal Windsor Horse Show, Olympia, The London International Horse Show and the FEI European Jumping and Dressage Championships 2009. The HPower Group has previously produced and directed All The Queen's Horses, Army 2002, and the World War 2 60th Anniversary Celebrations. Simon Brooks-Ward, managing director, was also Event Director for the Territorial Army's 100th Anniversary National Pageant on Horse Guards.

For further information please contact Kelly Smith on 01753 847915 or email kellys@hpower.co.uk

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