



A TOUR OF RUSSELL HOBAN'S LONDON SATURDAY 12TH FEBRUARY 2005

This is not meant to be a definitive tour of all the places in London mentioned in Russell Hoban's novels; we'd need at least a week for that! This is, rather, a whistle-stop tour of some of the principle Hoban-friendly London landmarks.

For each location there is both a MEETING POINT and a POINT OF INTEREST, with directions for each. Sometimes these are the same thing, or they are at least very close to each other, but in the case of the museums, directions are given firstly to the main entrance which is where we'll generally congregate before going inside, and then to the actual point(s) of interest indoors.

Travel between each stop will be on foot and by Underground or "Tube", the favoured mode of transport of Russell Hoban and his characters. As we are likely to be quite a large group, it may be difficult for us to stick together between stops – we may not all be able to get onto the same Tube carriage, or even at very busy points the same train, so please keep hold of these directions in case you get cut off from the rest of the group.

If you do find yourself at an initial Meeting Point on your own, wait for a few moments for others to turn up, but don't wait too long as the group may already be inside the museum! Volunteers who know London and would like to stay behind at a main Meeting Point to wait for another part of the group to arrive would be very welcome. Unless you're very late, we won't have gone to the next stop without you, so if in doubt, head towards the main Point of Interest.

The street maps and directions here are as detailed and up to date as possible, but if you get lost and really can't find your way call my mobile number **07984 820490** and I will try and direct you.

The arrival and departure times given are meant as a guide – they're not set in stone, but we should try and keep to them if we are to see all of these places in the space of a few hours. Depending on how we're doing for time you should be able to visit the museum shops, but please keep these visits as short as possible as these shops can get very busy and the tour could go completely off schedule if everyone stops to buy something.

If you would like to drop out of the tour at any time please make this clear to me or other members of the group, otherwise we might waste time waiting for you to turn up at the next location. Apart from this, there's only one rule in London – **DON'T STAND ON THE LEFT ON THE UNDERGROUND ESCALATORS!!**

-- Richard C.

(1) MOSS & CO TIMBER YARD (optional for early birds)

Dimes Place, 104 King Street, Hammersmith

Arrive Hammersmith Tube 9.00

Depart Hammersmith Tube 9.10

Arrive Moss & Co 9.15

Depart 9.40

HOBAN CONNEXION: This is the timber yard where Roswell Clark, protagonist of *The Bat Tattoo*, buys some lengths of European lime to make his crash-test ‘porno-dummies’ for Adelbert Delarue (pp39-41). We hope to meet the manager Stuart Duncan here, who is mentioned in the book.

MEETING POINT: As Dimes Place is hard to find, we’ll meet outside the main entrance to Hammersmith Tube Station (District/Piccadilly Lines) (or just inside the main concourse if it’s cold or wet) and walk to Dimes Place together. *NB: there are two Hammersmith Tube Stations! If you are outside the entrance to the one on the Hammersmith & City Line (a small station) you’re outside the wrong one – cross the road to the main station, which is a huge complex of shops and cafés and a bus station.* **DIRECTIONS FROM HAMMERSMITH TUBE STATION:** Turn left out of the station. Walk up King Street (the main high street) for about 5 minutes. Dimes Place is a tiny alleyway on your right – blink and you’ll miss it.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT STOP: Turn left out of Dimes Place. Walk up King Street 5 mins approx to the main Hammersmith Tube Station (on your right). Take a District Line train towards Upminster, or a Piccadilly Line train towards Cockfosters, 2 stops to Earl’s Court. Change to a District Line train towards Wimbledon 2 stops to Fulham Broadway.

(2) FULHAM BROADWAY (start of main tour)

Fulham Broadway Tube Station, Fulham

Arrive 10.00

Depart 10.10

HOBAN CONNEXION: Fulham is Russell Hoban’s own neighbourhood, and that of nearly all the (male) protagonists of his adult novels, including William G (*Turtle Diary*), Herman Orff (*The Medusa Frequency*), Peter Diggs (*Amaryllis Night and Day*), Roswell Clark (*The Bat Tattoo*), Harold Klein (*Angelica’s Grotto*) and Max Lesser (*Her Name Was Lola*); symbolically perhaps, Hoban’s female characters tend to live elsewhere in the city (unless like Luise they live with the hero, albeit briefly). Hoban tends to make only the occasional specific Fulham reference, such as Peter Diggs recalling taking Lenore to dinner at the Blue Elephant, an exclusive Thai restaurant in Fulham Broadway famed for its water features (and £20 starters!)

OTHER POINTS OF NOTE: Just up the road is Stamford Bridge, home of Chelsea FC. Fulham Broadway Tube Station has been considerably revamped since Herman Orff’s day, when he described it as “like an aircraft hangar, full of lift” and is now a large indoor shopping complex.

MEETING POINT: In the street outside the main doors from Fulham Broadway Tube Station, opposite the town hall (or just inside the main concourse if it’s cold or wet).

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT STOP: With Fulham Broadway Tube Station behind you, turn right and walk up Fulham Broadway for about 3 minutes, turning right at Marks & Spencers.

(3) ST JOHN'S CHURCH
Vanston Place / North End Road, Fulham
Arrive 10.15
Depart 10.25

HOBAN CONNEXION: This is where Roswell Clark (from *The Bat Tattoo*) wanders and finds the fibreglass Christ (pp71-4), and chats to the members of the "low-budget drinking community", some of whom will probably be making a cameo appearance on our tour.

OTHER POINTS OF NOTE: Eustace Road, where the *Bat Tattoo* modelmaker Dieter Scharf lives, is just around the corner (though it's not much to look at). Fulham Tattoo Centre, where Roswell has his actual bat tattoo done, is a little further up Fulham Road (not included in this tour).

MEETING POINT: Outside the church.

DIRECTIONS TO POINT OF INTEREST: the fibreglass Christ is on the North End Road side of the church.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT STOP: Retrace your steps down Fulham Broadway back to Fulham Broadway Tube Station. Take a District Line train towards Upminster 2 stops to Earl's Court. Change to the Piccadilly Line for a train towards Cockfosters 2 stops to South Kensington. Escalate to ground level and take the exit marked "Museums (Subway)". Walk all the way down the tunnel (5 mins' walk) and walk up the stairs into Exhibition Road. The Main Entrance to the Science Museum is just on your right.

(4) THE SCIENCE MUSEUM
Exhibition Road, South Kensington
Arrive 10.45
Depart 11.10

HOBAN CONNEXION: The Science Museum is where Peter Diggs from *Amaryllis Night and Day* goes to explore Klein bottles and first sees Amaryllis in the day (pp12-14).

MEETING POINT: Outside the Main Entrance.

DIRECTIONS TO POINT OF INTEREST: From the Main Entrance bear left, past the shop. Walk past the main desk (no entry fee is payable) and enter the lift. These lifts only take about 8 people at a time and only go to the 3rd Floor (we want the 2nd) but this is the only way up. At the 3rd Floor turn left & walk through the aerodynamics section towards the stairs. Go down 2 flights to the 2nd Floor. Turn right into Computing & Mathematics. The Klein Bottles are immediately on the right.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT STOP: Go back to the Main Entrance from the Klein bottles *exactly the way you came in* – otherwise you could get totally lost in this huge museum! Once outside, turn right, walk up Exhibition Road to the crossing and cross

towards the Victoria & Albert museum. The Main Entrance to the V&A is on your left in Cromwell Gardens (the main road).

(5) THE VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM
Cromwell Gardens, South Kensington
Arrive 11.15
Depart 11.40

HOBAN CONNEXION: Russell Hoban explains in the exclusive Hoban2005 interview: “Sarah Varley and Roswell Clark have a strange meeting on the steps of the V&A where she sits crying about the estimated end of the world in 500 million years. She’s come there for a fix on her favourite bat, the same one tattooed on her shoulder. It’s on a bowl in the Chinese Ceramics room [*but see note below! – RC*], which is where she and Roswell have their second meeting. He’s come to the V&A looking for a bat to be copied in a tattoo for himself. I look for strange encounters because I never have a plot outline; a strange encounter offers good chances of character and action development and usually gets me moving along to whatever comes next.”

MEETING POINT: On the steps outside the main entrance in Cromwell Gardens. (Sitting on steps and crying about end of world not obligatory.)

DIRECTIONS TO POINT OF INTEREST: Once in the main hall on the ground floor (past the bag check) bear right, where the bowl has been put on temporary display for us in the T.T. Tsui Gallery of Chinese Art in the ‘Eating and Drinking’ section (the case is under ‘Food’). (Owing to recent thefts from the V&A, all the ceramics galleries, where the bowl usually lives, are currently closed. However, the lovely Ming Wilson, whom Russ himself liaised with when writing the novel, has specially arranged for this particular bowl to be relocated so that we can see it.)

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT STOP: Come out of the V&A’s main entrance and turn right into Cromwell Gardens. Walk up, then cross Exhibition Road towards the entrance to the Underground walkway. Turn right into the tunnel and walk back to South Kensington Tube station. Escalate down and take a Piccadilly Line train towards Cockfosters 5 stops to Leicester Square. Upon arrival take EXIT 1 from Leicester Square station and turn left. Gaby’s Deli is a few yards down on your left.

(6) LUNCH STOP – LEICESTER SQUARE for Gaby’s Deli and other eateries
Arrive 12.00
Depart 1.00

HOBAN CONNEXION: Sarah Varnham namechecks this delightful small restaurant in *The Bat Tattoo*, famed for hot salt beef sandwiches, falafel and other (mostly vegetarian) delights. Russell Hoban also once posted to the Kraken, under the subject line REMEMBRANCE OF PAST RAMI: “It’s interesting how one becomes resigned to things that aren’t the real thing. When I lived in New York one of my cardiovascular-unfriendly delights was hot pastrami on rye. The hot pastrami ethos dictated that the sandwich be much of a too-muchness. I always had to put some of the meat aside on the plate for the second time round. When I came here I found that pastrami hadn’t (at least not on my usual routes) so I made do with salt beef which is OK but it isn’t hot pastrami. Once at a lunch bar in the West End I had what they called New York pastrami but it was only the ghost of a faded echo of the real high-cholesterol hit. Now when I recall rami past all I can do is shake my head and say ‘Où sont les neiges d’antan?’ That’s how it goes...”

MEETING POINT: Outside the deli. NB: We have made a booking, but this is a small restaurant (more of a café really) and owing to the compact nature of the deli and uncertainty of lunchtime trade we may not all be able to sit together, or even to all fit in at the same time. In this eventuality some group members may need to volunteer to either have a take-away or eat at one of the many other lunch spots in the immediate vicinity.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT STOP: Turn left out of Gaby's and walk down Charing Cross Road towards Trafalgar Square. Do not confuse the National Gallery with the National Portrait Gallery, which you come to first. Turn right onto Trafalgar Square; the main elevated entrance to the National Gallery is currently being renovated; the temporary entrance (the "Getty Entrance") is at ground level just on the right.

(7) THE NATIONAL GALLERY

Trafalgar Square

Arrive 1.05

Depart 1.30

HOBAN CONNEXION: Hoban characters from Peter Diggs to Harold Klein and Max Lesser constantly visit the National Gallery for their fix on classical art, probably unsurprisingly what with Russell Hoban being an ex-illustrator and admirer of classical beholds such as that proudly displayed in *The Judgment of Paris* and *The Rokeby Venus*.

MEETING POINT: Outside the Getty Entrance.

DIRECTIONS TO POINTS OF INTEREST: From the interior of the Getty Entrance, bear left towards the information desks, take the stairs to the main galleries and turn right. The various works we want to see, including *A Peepshow with Views of the Interior of a Dutch House* (from *Mr Rinyo-Clacton's Offer*) by Samuel van Hoogstraten and *Close-Hauled in a Strong Breeze* by William van de Velde are located very close to each other in the series of rooms referred to as 'Paintings 1600-1700'.

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT STOP: From outside the Getty Entrance in Trafalgar Square, turn left and retrace your footsteps back to Leicester Square Tube Station. There are two entrances to the station on either side of the road; use the entrance on the same side as Gaby's Deli. Escalate down and take a Piccadilly Line train to Cockfosters 3 stops to Russell Square. At Russell Square take the lift to ground level and turn left out of the exit. Turn left again into Southampton Row. Walk up and turn right into Bloomsbury Place, which becomes Great Russell Street. The British Museum is on your right past Montague Street.

(8) THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury

Arrive 1.50

Depart whenever you like!

HOBAN CONNEXION: The British Museum houses the beautiful stone bas reliefs depicting the Royal Lion Hunts from Nineveh which inspired much of *The Lion of Boaz-Jachin* and *Jachin-Boaz*.

MEETING POINT: In the main courtyard at the front of the Museum.

DIRECTIONS TO POINT OF INTEREST: Once inside the main entrance turn left, head down the corridor and turn right into “Ancient Near East”. Turn left between the Winged Lions, then right into room 7, then immediately left into room 10 which contains the bas-reliefs.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST: The main circular hall of the Museum with its famous new roof and library are well worth seeing before you go (retrace your steps back to the main entrance and it’s right in front of you).

DIRECTIONS TO NEXT STOP: This is the last stop on the tour! From here, time permitting (don’t forget you need to be in Parson’s Green at 7pm for the Nomad Books event) you can go wherever you like. Some suggestions...

Bloomsbury. The area of London you’re in now is well worth exploring, with lots of old bookshops, cafés, pubs and lovely street names such as Coptic Street and Little Russell Street. Russell Hoban’s first UK publisher Jonathan Cape is in Bedford Square off Gower Street, although confusingly his current publisher, Bloomsbury, is not actually in Bloomsbury but Soho (a short walk, Soho Square being a left-turn off Oxford Street just past Tottenham Court Road tube station (*q.v. below*)).

Tottenham Court Road (as mentioned in *The Moment under The Moment*). With the main entrance to the museum behind you, turn right into Great Russell Street, left into Bloomsbury Street and right into New Oxford Street. The busy road running crossways ahead of you is northwards (right) Tottenham Court Road (famous for its computer shops) and southwards (left) Charing Cross Road (famous for its secondhand bookshops). Tottenham Court Road station is right in front of you as you come down New Oxford Street, on the corner of the junction of Oxford Street, Charing Cross Road and Tottenham Court Road.

Tiranti’s. The arts & crafts shop where Roswell Clark buys his wood-carving items in *The Bat Tattoo* is a short walk from Warren Street tube station. The best way to get there from the British Museum is to walk to Tottenham Court Road tube station (*q.v. above*) and take a northbound Northern Line train 2 stops to Warren Street. From the tube exit turn right into Warren Street itself and Tiranti’s is a few minutes’ walk on your left. Please note that this very small specialist shop, although staffed by friendly and sympathetic people, cannot accommodate a large group.

Want to head back to your hotel and/or Nomad Books? The best route from the British Museum is to retrace your steps back to Russell Square tube and take the Piccadilly Line towards Heathrow or Uxbridge – Earl’s Court is 10 stops (about 20 minutes) away. If you want to travel straight on to the Nomad Books event (starting at 7pm), at Earl’s Court take a District Line train towards Wimbledon 3 stops to Parson’s Green. From Parson’s Green turn left out of the station into Parson’s Green Lane, then left again into Fulham Road, and Nomad Books is about 100 yards on your left (no. 781).