

## Cumberland Lodge

### A Brief History

A main purpose of the Foundation has always been to provide a place to serve the needs of students and to encourage an interchange of thought between British and overseas students, in particular with those from the Commonwealth. Each year the Lodge is used by over 3,500 students and their teachers, predominantly from the colleges of the University of London, but also from other universities and institutions of higher education, including the Inns of Court. When the Lodge is not needed by students, it hosts a variety of professional and other groups who come together to discuss matters of common concern in this informal and relaxed environment.

Each year the Foundation organises **Cumberland Lodge Conferences** which enable a group of invited guests meet to discuss in depth an important contemporary issue. Two or more conferences each year are designed particularly for postgraduate students, and attract delegates from a mixture of academic disciplines. Some themes, particularly the modern Commonwealth and social aspects of Policing, repeat every year, in a mix of Arts, social policy and international affairs topics. Dates and conference details are regularly updated on our website – [www.cumberlandlodge.ac.uk](http://www.cumberlandlodge.ac.uk).

**Cumberland Lodge** is a Christian educational charity which was the product of the imagination and insight of Amy Buller. Drawing on her experiences in Germany between the two world wars, she believed that the rise of Nazism had been significantly aided by the great German universities not teaching students to use their critical judgement on the world around them and not providing an environment where the great issues of the day could be openly discussed. Amy Buller thus conceived the idea of a residential centre where students could come with their teachers and, in a relaxed atmosphere, consider important ethical and social issues outside the normal confines of their degree courses. She gained the active support of the King and Queen and, when Cumberland Lodge became vacant on the death of Lord FitzAlan in 1947, they granted it to St Katharine's Foundation - as it was first known. To recognise the prime role played by their Majesties in establishing the Trust, its name was changed in 1968 to the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Foundation of St Catharine's. Members of the Royal Family continue to take an interest in the Foundation. The Queen became our Patron in 2003, following the death of the Queen Mother. The Foundation was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee in 2005.

**The Foundation is housed within Cumberland Lodge**, which was originally built in the middle of the seventeenth century by John Byfield, a captain in Cromwell's army. Taken over by Charles 11, for much of its subsequent history it was the official residence of the Ranger of The Great Park - a Crown appointment always held by someone close to the Sovereign. Among those who have lived at the Lodge are the first Ranger Baptist May, Sarah Churchill Duchess of Marlborough and William Augustus Duke of Cumberland. In 1872, the Lodge became the home of Queen Victoria's daughter, Princess Helena, and her husband Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein. After Princess Christian's death in 1923, it was granted to Lord FitzAlan of Derwent, the last Viceroy of Ireland. In 1936 Cumberland Lodge was used for key meetings between the King's Private Secretary and Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin which eventually led to the abdication of King Edward VIII. Since the Foundation began in 1947 many notable people have worked at the Lodge or contributed to its programmes.