

David Hampshire



# London's Monumental Walks

15 Walks Taking in the City's Best Monuments, Statues & Memorials



# LONDON'S MONUMENTAL WALKS

15 Walks Taking in the City's Best  
Monuments, Statues & Memorials

by David Hampshire



City Books • Bath • England

First published 2018

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Cover design: City Books

Cover photo: Albert Memorial

Maps © Jim Watson

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A CIP record for this book is available  
from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-909282-95-7

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Printed in China

# Acknowledgements

**T**he author would like to thank all the many people who helped with research and provided information for this book. Special thanks are due to Alex Browning for her invaluable research, Graeme & Louise Chesters and Richard Todd; Robbi Forrester Atilgan for editing; Peter Read for additional editing and proof-reading; Susan Griffith for final proof checking; John Marshall for DTP, photo selection and cover design; and Jim Watson for the superb maps.

Last, but not least, a special thank you to the many photographers – the unsung heroes – whose beautiful images bring London to life.

## ACCESS

Most buildings and public spaces (e.g. parks) in London provide wheelchair access, but this doesn't apply to private buildings and gardens. Contact the relevant company or organisation if you have specific requirements. The Disabled Go website ([www.disabledgo.com](http://www.disabledgo.com)) provides more in-depth access information for many destinations.



# Author's Notes

Please note the following regarding the walks in this book.

- ◆ **Length & Duration:** The length of walks is approximate – shown to the nearest quarter mile – as is the time required to complete them, particularly if you make a lot of stops (coffee, lunch, museums, shopping, etc.). The average walking speed is around 3mph but we have allowed for a much slower pace of just 2mph. (The idea isn't to get from the start to finish as quickly as possible!) You can, of course, start a walk from either end, combine a number of walks to make a longer walk, or alternatively, shorten a walk. Most walks are graded easy or moderate with relatively few steep hills or steps.
- ◆ **Opening Hours:** Most of the buildings and public spaces (e.g. parks) included in the walks are open seven days a week; opening times may vary for weekdays/weekends and by season. Most parks and gardens offer free access, unless otherwise indicated. The opening hours of many sights and museums (etc.) are listed, though these are liable to change. Where there's an entry fee, it's noted.
- ◆ **Transport:** All walks start and end at or near a tube or railway station. Most can also be reached by bus (routes aren't listed as there are too many to include them all) and sometimes by river ferry. The postcode of the starting point is shown should you wish to drive. However, the nearest car park or on-road parking may be some distance away, particularly in central London – and can be expensive. Also, walks don't always return to the starting point.
- ◆ **Maps:** The maps aren't drawn to scale. Points of interest are numbered. An overall map of London is included on pages 8-9, showing the approximate location of walks.
- ◆ **Food & Drink:** Recommended 'pit stops' have been included in all walks – shown in **yellow** in the map key and in the text (other food and drink places are numbered as landmarks but aren't specifically recommended). When not listed, a pub/restaurant's meal times are usually the 'standard' hours, e.g. noon-2.30 or 3pm and 6-11pm, although some are open all day and may also serve food all day (as do cafés). Many pubs are also open in the mornings for coffee and breakfast (etc). Telephone numbers are listed where bookings are advisable or necessary, otherwise booking isn't usually required or even possible. Note that in the City of London (the financial district), many establishments are open only from Monday to Friday. A rough price guide is included (£ = inexpensive, ££ = moderate, £££ = expensive); most recommended places fall into the inexpensive category.

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John Betjeman, St Pancras Station

# Introduction

It isn't perhaps surprising that in a city as rich in history as London, there's a wealth of public monuments, statues and memorials: in fact London probably has more statues than any other city in the world. Its streets, squares, parks and gardens are crammed with monuments to kings and queens, military heroes, politicians and local worthies, artists and writers, and notables from every walk of life, not to mention a few more controversial characters such as Oliver Cromwell and Arthur 'Bomber' Harris.

Many monuments celebrate great military victories such as Trafalgar or Waterloo, but there are also those that recall acts of courage by ordinary folk – like the plaques in Postman's Park – and a few which remember deeds perhaps best forgotten. Many subjects remain famous today – such as Prince Albert, who has the most impressive memorial in London – while others have faded from memory, but all have contributed to this great city and nation in some way and most are deserving of their place in history. As well as statues and monuments, we have also included magnificent fountains, wall reliefs and murals; the latter brighten up the walls of Fitzrovia and Soho.

London is also blessed with an abundance of abstract and contemporary works of art, which fire the imagination and add a touch of colour and surreal magic to its grey cityscape. Nowhere is this more so than in the City (the financial district, aka the Square Mile) – which has a long tradition of commissioning public works of art – where sculpture is an integral part of many new developments. The City is home to an annual 'Sculpture in the City' exhibition ([www.sculptureinthecity.org.uk](http://www.sculptureinthecity.org.uk)), when its streets are adorned with striking works from internationally renowned artists, while Regent's Park is the venue for the superb Frieze Sculpture Exhibition from July to October.

The walks in this book are between 2 and 6½ miles (3¼ to 10½ km) in length, averaging around 3½ miles (5½ km). However, it's best to allow half a day for the shorter walks and as much as a full day for the longer walks – particularly if you plan to partake of the many excellent pubs, restaurants and cafés along the routes (for your author, a good lunch is a prerequisite of a good walk!) – not to mention the many other diversions such as museums, galleries and churches.

Researching and writing *London's Monumental Walks* has been a fascinating and enjoyable journey. We hope you find them as entertaining and rewarding as we did; all you need is a comfortable pair of shoes, a sense of adventure – and this book.

David Hampshire  
July 2018





sea Park

**END**  
Bond Street tube



- |                              |                          |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Eleanor Cross              | 19 Leicester Square      |
| 2 Golden Springbok           | 20 Shakespeare Monument  |
| 3 Trafalgar Square           | 21 Charlie Chaplin       |
| 4 Nelson's Column            | 22 Glockenspiel          |
| 5 Bronze Lions               | 23 Horses of Helios      |
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| 17 Sir Henry Irving          |                          |
| 18 National Portrait Gallery |                          |

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- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 34 Peace                          | 43 Berkeley Square                     |
| 35 Julius Salter Ellis            | 44 Woman of Samaria                    |
| 36 Royal Academy of Arts          | 45 Silence                             |
| 37 Sir Joshua Reynolds            | 46 Grosvenor Square                    |
| 38 RA Grand Café                  | 47 President Franklin Delano Roosevelt |
| 39 Horse and Rider                | 48 President Dwight D. Eisenhower      |
| 40 Allies                         | 49 President Ronald Wilson Reagan      |
| 41 Abstract Pieces by Henry Moore | 50 September 11 Memorial Garden        |
| 42 Effigy of Sekhmet              | 51 Selfridges                          |

## Trafalgar Square to Grosvenor Square

## Walk 1



**Distance:** 3½ miles (5½ km)

**Terrain:** easy

**Duration:** 2-3 hours

**Start:** Charing Cross tube/rail

**End:** Bond Street tube

**Postcode:** WC2N 5DR

**T**his walk begins in Trafalgar Square and explores the squares and spaces at the very heart of London – quite literally, as all distances from the capital are measured from here. One of the city’s most prominent landmarks, Trafalgar Square commemorates the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, a great British naval victory over the fleets of France and Spain off the coast

of Cape Trafalgar in Spain. Not surprisingly, the square is where many of Britain’s military heroes are commemorated, not least Admiral Horatio Nelson, shown left, who commanded the British fleet at Trafalgar.

Admiral Nelson



From Trafalgar Square we visit Leicester Square – named after Leicester House, residence of the Earl of Leicester. This was a gentrified residential area in the 17th and 18th centuries, home to William Hogarth and Joshua

Reynolds – both have statues in the square – but is now the centre of the city’s entertainment quarter. From here it’s a short hop to Piccadilly Circus – and its iconic statue of ‘Eros’ – and St James’s, one of London’s most affluent districts, noted for its gentlemen’s clubs and upmarket boutiques.

From St James’s we cross to exclusive Mayfair to visit the Royal Academy, Bond Street and Berkeley Square. The walk culminates in Grosvenor Square – the home of the official American presence in London from 1785 to 2017 (when the US Embassy moved south of the river) – which contains a number of statues and memorials to US leaders. From here it’s a short walk to Bond Street tube station, our final destination.

# Trafalgar Square to Grosvenor Square

## Start Walking...

Leave Charing Cross station by the main exit onto the Strand. In the middle of the forecourt is the **Eleanor Cross** ①, a 19th-century replica of a 13th-century structure built by Edward I (1239-1307) in memory of his wife Eleanor of Castile who died in 1290. There were 12 such crosses, marking the places her body rested on its journey from Lincoln to London; the last cross was the most ornate and is where Charing Cross derives its name from. The original cross was located at the top of Whitehall, where a statue of Charles I astride his horse now stands (see box).

From the station turn left along the Strand, where on the right-hand side at the end is South Africa House, which is adorned with a number of animal sculptures, including a leaping **Golden Springbok** ② on the corner of the building. Immediately in front of you is **Trafalgar Square** ③ designed by Charles Barry and one of London's largest and most iconic squares, home to a

## Statue of Charles I



This elegant statue was commissioned around 1633 by Richard Weston, Lord High Treasurer to Charles I, who planned to erect it in his garden at

Roehampton, Surrey. It now stands facing down Whitehall towards Banqueting House, the place where its subject was executed in 1649. After the English Civil War the statue was sold to metal-worker John Rivett to be melted down, but he hid it until the Restoration in 1660. It was installed here in 1675 on the site where eight of the king's regicides – those who signed his death warrant – were themselves executed. The statue stands on the site of the last Eleanor Cross; a bronze plaque set in the pavement behind the statue marks the official centre of the city, from where all distances from London are measured.

wealth of statues and monuments. At the south side of the square is **Nelson's Column** ④, the city's best-known monument, honouring Admiral Horatio Nelson (1758-1805) who defeated the French



# Walk 1

Bronze Lion, Trafalgar Square



and Spanish fleets at the Battle of Trafalgar, but died at the moment of victory. Designed by William Railton and built between 1840 and 1843, the Corinthian column is 170ft (50m) high and is topped by an 18ft/5.5m sandstone statue of Nelson by Edward Hodges Baily, looking south towards the Admiralty. The square pedestal at the foot of the column is decorated with four superb 18ft<sup>2</sup> bas-relief bronze panels cast from captured French guns, depicting Nelson's most famous victories. Sir Edwin Landseer's four monumental **Bronze Lions** 5 guarding the base of the column were unveiled in 1867, 24 years after the column was erected. Just behind the column, in the centre of the traffic island, is French sculptor Hubert Le Sueur's equestrian statue of **Charles I** 6 (see box, page 13).

In front of Nelson's Column are four plinths, one in each corner. In the southwest corner is George Gammon's bronze of General Sir Charles Napier, installed in 1856 – Napier (1782-1853) is best known for his campaigns in India – while in the southeast corner is William Behnes' statue of Major General Sir Henry Havelock (1795-1857), who's famous for

the relief of Lucknow during the Indian Mutiny of 1857-9. On the plinth in the northeast corner is an exceptional equestrian statue of George IV (1762-1830) by Sir Francis Chantrey, installed in 1843. The **Fourth Plinth** 7 (see box below), in the northwest corner, was originally intended for an equestrian statue of William IV, but the money ran out. Over the next 150 years there was much discussion about what to do with it (mustn't rush these things!), but it wasn't until 1999 that the decision was made to use it to display contemporary artworks.

## Fourth Plinth



Many people wanted a permanent statue to occupy the fourth plinth, but the temporary occupants continue to amuse, inspire – and occasionally annoy. A sculpture of a (very) blue cockerel by Katharina Fritsch in 2013 led to controversy: a national symbol of France in a square celebrating a victory over that country! Other artworks to grace the plinth have included a golden rocking horse, Nelson's ship in a bottle, a bronze skeletal rider-less horse (shown) and a giant hand in a thumbs-up gesture (with a really long thumb).

On the north wall of the square, to the left of the George IV statue, are busts of three of Britain's greatest 20th-century naval heroes: (from left to right) Admirals Cunningham, Jellicoe and Beatty.

# Trafalgar Square to Grosvenor Square

St Martin-in-the-Fields

## St Martin-in-the-Fields

One of London's most beloved churches, St Martin was designed by James Gibbs and completed in 1726 – and contains an abundance of memorials. In the church's portico is Mike Chapman's 1999 sculpture **Christ Child** **14**, depicting a newborn baby that seems to emerge from a lump of rock; indeed, the baby's umbilical cord disappears into a 4.5-tonne block of Portland stone. In the southeast corner of the churchyard is the John Law Baker Memorial Drinking Fountain, a truncated fluted column with lion's-head fountains on two sides.



They were originally intended to stand at the centre of the fountains, but the Second World War intervened. The square's fountains also commemorate Beatty and Jellicoe: the western fountain is the Jellicoe Memorial Fountain and the eastern fountain the Beatty Memorial Fountain. The quatrefoil-shaped basins are by Charles Barry, though Lutyens added the vase-shaped central fountains; both contain fine bronze sculptural groups (mermaids, dolphins, sharks, etc.), the western fountain by Charles Wheeler and the eastern by William McMillan.

In the northwest corner of the square, on the lawn in front of the **National Gallery** **8**, stands a fine bronze of **James II** **9** (1633-1701) – one of Britain's least popular monarchs – portrayed as a Roman emperor by Grinling Gibbons, who's widely regarded as Britain's finest wood carver. At the eastern end of the National Gallery (also on the lawn) is a bronze of **George Washington** **10**

(1732-99), the first President of the United States of America; it's a replica of an original by Jean Antoine Houdon. Standing next to Washington is a column of 13 rods (or fasces), a symbol of power and strength through unity, which represent the founding states of the union.

Leaving the square via the southwest corner, walk along Cockspur Street and turn right into Pall Mall East, where there's a splendid equestrian statue of **George III** **11** (1738-1820) by Matthew Cotes Wyatt. Highly controversial in its day (George III was widely reviled), today it's a much-admired work, portraying the king astride his favourite horse, Adonis. Continue along Pall Mall East to the right, past the National Gallery to Duncannon Street, where on the left side stands **St Martin-in-the-Fields** **12** (see box above), home to the award-winning **Café in the Crypt** **13**.

Continue along Duncannon Street and turn left down car-free Adelaide Street, where there's a striking memorial to **Oscar Wilde** **15**

# Walk 1

## Edith Cavell

Celebrated for saving the lives of soldiers on both sides during the Great War, Edith Cavell (1865-1915) was a pioneer of modern nursing and was running a nurses' training school in Brussels when the Germans occupied Belgium. She was arrested in August 1915, accused of treason, court-martialled and sentenced to death. Despite international appeals for mercy, Cavell was executed by a German firing squad in October 1915, an act which received worldwide condemnation.



(1854-1900), writer, playwright and wit. The eccentric sculpture by Maggi Hambling – titled *A Conversation with Oscar Wilde* – was unveiled in 1998 and shows the head of Wilde (and a hand holding a cigarette – which has been stolen on several occasions) rising from a dark granite sarcophagus. The memorial is inscribed with one of Wilde's best quotes: 'We are all in the gutter but some of us are looking at the stars', from *Lady Windermere's Fan*.

Turn left at the end of Adelaide Street into William IV Street and St Martin's Place, where on the left there's a grand memorial to **Edith Cavell** <sup>16</sup> (see box above), a British nurse who became a reluctant heroine during the First World War. The Carrara marble

statue by George Frampton was unveiled in 1920 and portrays Cavell in her matron's uniform beneath the inscription, 'For King and Country'. On top of the column is a sculpture of a woman and child, symbolising humanity, and on the back a British lion trampling on a serpent.

From St Martin's Place go right up Charing Cross Road where, on the north side of the National Portrait Gallery, is Thomas Brock's (1910) bronze of **Sir Henry Irving** <sup>17</sup> (1838-1905). A giant of the stage in the late 19th century (and the first actor to be knighted), Irving's statue is – surprisingly – the only thespian statue in central London, apart from that of Charlie Chaplin (see below). Established in 1856, the **National Portrait Gallery** <sup>18</sup> was the first of its kind in the world; the building was designed by Ewan Christian (in rather fanciful Florentine style) and opened to the public in 1896. The top of the façade, on both St Martin's Place and Irving Street, contains 18 medallions housing busts of artists and other notables, including Joshua Reynolds, William Hogarth, Louis-Francois Roubiliac, Peter Lely, Anthony Van Dyke and Hans Holbein the Younger (but no John Constable or JMW Turner!).

From the gallery take the first left down Irving Street to **Leicester Square** <sup>19</sup>, the heart of London's theatre district. Originally named Leicester Fields, the square was laid out in the 17th century by the Earl of Leicester. At the centre of the square is the **Shakespeare Monument** <sup>20</sup> by

# Trafalgar Square to Grosvenor Square

## Food & Drink

- 13** **Café in the Crypt:** A popular spot for breakfast, dinner and everything in between (hours vary, see [www.stmartin-in-the-fields.org/visit/cafe-in-the-crypt](http://www.stmartin-in-the-fields.org/visit/cafe-in-the-crypt), £).
- 38** **Royal Academy Grand Café:** A relaxing setting for a snack, lunch or afternoon tea (daily, 10am-5.30pm, £).
- 51** **Selfridges:** This supercool store has a wide choice of cafés, bars and restaurants, from the Italian rooftop 'alto' by San Carlo restaurant to the Hemsley+Hemsley café, Aubaine French bistro to the Champagne & Oyster Bar by Caviar House & Prunier (see [www.selfridges.com/GB/en/features/info/restaurants/london-restaurantguide](http://www.selfridges.com/GB/en/features/info/restaurants/london-restaurantguide), £-££).

Giovanni Fontana, described by the art expert Nikolaus Pevsner as 'the most unpretentious monument that a capital has ever put up to their greatest national poet'. The marble figure – after an original by Peter Scheemakers in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey – was unveiled in 1874

and is mounted on a pedestal flanked by dolphins at the centre of a fountain. Nowadays Leicester Square is synonymous with London's 'Theatreland', and is also where the latest blockbusters are premiered at one of the grand cinemas flanking the square. It's therefore appropriate that the final statue in the square is that of **Charlie Chaplin** **21** (1889-1977) by John Doubleday unveiled in 1981 – portrayed as the Tramp, his most famous role, with baggy trousers, derby hat and cane. Although he made his name in Hollywood, Chaplin was born in Walworth, south London.

From the square take the northwest (left) turning into Swiss Court to see the famous **Glockenspiel** **22**; originally attached to the front of the Swiss Centre (demolished in 2008), it was installed here in 2011 and sits atop a 'cantonal tree' displaying the coats of arms of the 26 cantons of Switzerland.



Shakespeare Monument

# Walk 1

Horses of Helios



Continue along Coventry Street, where on the left (opposite Great Windmill Street, home of the celebrated Windmill 'we never closed' Theatre) is the stunning **Horses of Helios** <sup>23</sup> statue and fountain. The bronze sculpture by Rudy Weller was installed in 1992 and depicts the four horses of Helios – Aethon, Eos, Phlegon and Pyrois – Greek God of the Sun. High above the statue, diving from the roof of the Criterion building, are the beautiful **Three Graces** <sup>24</sup>, aka the Daughters of Helios; also by Rudy Weller (1992), it's made of aluminium covered in gold leaf. A few steps further on you come to Piccadilly Circus, home to one of London's most beloved landmarks, the statue of **Eros** <sup>25</sup> (see box), in front of the Criterion Theatre.

From the Circus head down Regent Street Saint James's



Three Graces

(renamed in September 2014) and take the third right into Charles II Street, which leads to **St James's Square** <sup>26</sup> (garden, Mon-Fri 10am-4.30pm). The only square in the exclusive St James's district, it was built after the restoration of Charles II in 1660 and is flanked by predominantly Georgian and Neo-Georgian architecture. In the centre of the garden is an equestrian bronze of **William III** <sup>27</sup> (1650-1702) by John Bacon (father and son), erected in 1808. The statue portrays the king as a Roman general and, unusually, includes a small molehill under the left rear hoof of the horse. The king died of pneumonia, a complication arising from a broken collarbone he suffered after a fall from his horse, Sorrell, which had stumbled on a molehill. Due to the mole's 'contribution' to the king's

## Eros



Officially named the Shaftesbury Memorial Fountain, Eros was unveiled in 1893. The fountain commemorates the philanthropy of Lord

Shaftesbury (1801-1885) and is topped by Alfred Gilbert's statue of a winged nude archer. The statue – the first made entirely of aluminium – is an icon of London, even being used as the symbol of London's *Evening Standard* newspaper, but it's actually misnamed. It's popularly thought to depict Eros, the Greek god of sexual love, but it's actually Anteros, his twin brother, the Greek god of selfless love.

# Trafalgar Square to Grosvenor Square

demise, his Jacobite opponents fondly toasted the health of 'the little gentleman in the black velvet waistcoat'. In the southwest corner of the square is a bronze stag by Marcus Cornish, installed in 2001, while in the northeast corner (outside the square) is a memorial to **WPC Yvonne**

**Fletcher** <sup>28</sup> (1958-1984), who was fatally shot by someone in the Libyan People's Bureau building (embassy) opposite. On the rooftop of 11 St James's Square, northwest of the square, are four **Classical Muses** <sup>29</sup> – goddesses of music, poetry, the arts and science – while next door (number 10) is Chatham House, former home of Prime Minister William Pitt the Elder.



Beau Brummell

From the square, take the western exit to King Street and turn right into Duke Street St James's and go left along Jermyn Street, where outside the entrance to Piccadilly Arcade (on the right) is a fine statue of **Beau Brummell** <sup>30</sup> (1778-1840). A dandy and close friend of the Prince Regent (later George IV), he was the greatest celebrity of his day, but

fell from favour when he famously asked the person standing next to the prince, 'Who's your fat friend?' Reckless spending and gambling debts forced him to flee to France, where he died penniless. The statue, by Czech sculptor Irena Sedlecká, was unveiled in 2002.



Fortnum & Mason clock

Walk through the arcade to Piccadilly (if closed, return to Duke Street St James's and turn left). On the right is the Queen's favourite store, **Fortnum & Mason** <sup>31</sup>, founded in 1707, which has a splendid external clock. The ornate clock plays a selection of airs on 18 bells every 15 minutes, but the main event takes place on the hour when 4ft-high models of the store's two founders emerge and bow to each other, accompanied by chimes and 18th-century music. Continue east along Piccadilly to **St James's Piccadilly** <sup>32</sup>, a majestic Anglican parish church designed by Sir Christopher Wren and consecrated in 1684. The church's interior is worth a look, as it includes a superb reredos by Grinling Gibbons, but you're here to see the statues in the church's garden. These include **Mary of**

# Walk 1

St James's Piccadilly



**Nazareth** <sup>33</sup> by Charles Wheeler (ca. 1925), erected in 1975; **Peace** <sup>34</sup> by Alfred Frank Hardiman (ca. 1926); and, also by Hardiman, a memorial fountain to **Julius Salter Elias** <sup>35</sup> (1873-1946), 1st Viscount Southwood, a British newspaper proprietor and Labour politician.

Cross to the north side of Piccadilly and go west to the **Royal Academy of Arts** <sup>36</sup> (entry fee, 10am-6pm, 10pm Fri – see box right) located in Burlington House, one of London's finest Palladian buildings. The splendid reliefs around the entrance porch are by John Birnie Philip and date from 1874. The Royal Academy (RA) is an independent institution run by eminent artists to promote the creation and appreciation of visual arts. It was founded in 1768 by George III to educate, encourage and exhibit work by contemporary British artists; at the time fashionable taste leaned

towards traditional and continental art, and home-grown artists had little chance to shine. Visitors are greeted by Alfred Drury's theatrical bronze of **Sir Joshua Reynolds** <sup>37</sup> (1723-1792), a leading portrait painter and the RA's first president, situated in the courtyard in front of the Academy.

On the second floor level on the façade of Burlington House is an eclectic collection of statues, which include (from left to right) Phideas (the greatest ancient Greek sculptor) by Joseph Durham; Leonardo by Edward Stephens; Flaxman (the eminent English sculptor) and Raphael, both by Henry Weekes; Michelangelo and Titian by William Calder Marshall; Sir Joshua Reynolds and Wren by Edward Stephens; and, bizarrely, William of Wykeham (1320-1404), also by Durham. Wykeham was a medieval Bishop of Winchester, Chancellor of England and founder of New College (Oxford) and Winchester College – but not an artist. Below, at either end of the ground level arcade, are two poignant war memorials: to the west is Trenwith Wills' Royal Academy Memorial

## Michelangelo at the RA

The Academy has a vast collection of exhibits, but among the most cherished and charming is Michelangelo's *Taddei Tondo*, displayed in a purpose-built area on the Sackler Gallery landing. Created in Florence in 1504-06, it's the only marble work ((relief) by Michelangelo in the UK, and depicts the Virgin Mary and Child with the infant St John the Baptist.