

Bush House – did you know...?

We've just started booking events in our first, completed space in our new acquisition, Bush House. There are dozens of other rooms and outdoor areas which are currently under renovation, soon to be open for hire. We at King's Venues are really excited about the new venue, so much so, we wanted to share with you some of the fascinating details that make up the story of the building and its former inhabitants to date.

Construction

Construction of Bush House and the complex of buildings began in 1919 and wasn't completed until 1935. In 1929 it was declared the world's most expensive building having clocked up costs of around £2million.

Concept

Bush House was designed by US architect Harvey W Corbett and funded by fellow American, Irving T Bush, with the intention of creating an international trade centre. The building was originally designed to house exhibition space, galleries, theatres, a cinema, swimming pool – the list goes on!

Intention

The words above the archway of Bush House read 'To the friendship of the English Speaking Peoples' and the statues under the arch symbolise American and Britain.

Longest residents

The BBC never owned the building, but began to move in some of their services in 1941. The rest of the BBC World Service departments soon followed and they stayed there right up until 2012. At one point the world's largest broadcaster was communicating in over 40 languages to more than 200 million listeners.

Literary connection

George Orwell, who worked as a producer at the BBC between 1941 and 1943, is said to have based the Ministry of Truth's canteen, described in his book '1984', on the one at Bush House.

And finally...

An arm of one of the statues fell off after a bomb fell nearby in 1944. It wasn't replaced until the 1970s by the Indiana Limestone Company.

King's Venues at Bush House

If you're interested in holding an event at Bush House, we've already completed renovations on a Harvard-style lecture theatre which can accommodate up to 120 delegates. Later this summer we will be opening a large hospitality suite on the 8th floor which sits in between two fantastic roof terraces, this space can also cater for 120 guests. Before the year's out we were also going to have a second, much larger lecture theatre, with retractable seating, that can host up to 400 attendees. If you have any questions or would like to make an enquiry, call our Events Team on +44 (0)20 7848 1700.