

QUEEN'S BATON RELAY FACTS

29 October 2009 - 3 October 2010

340 days around the Commonwealth

The Queen's Baton Relay is one of the great traditions of the Commonwealth Games. It symbolises the gathering of people from across the Commonwealth at a four yearly festival of sport and culture. Queen's Baton Relays have been the curtain raiser to every games since Cardiff, Wales, in 1958.

The relay traditionally begins with a commencement ceremony at Buckingham Palace, London, which coincides with the city's Commonwealth Day festivities. There, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II entrusts the baton containing Her 'message to the athletes' to the first honorary Batonbearer.

The relay concludes at the opening ceremony of the each games, when the final Batonbearer hands the baton back to Her Majesty, or Her representative, and the message is read aloud. At that moment the relay ends and the games begin.

Over the years, the Queen's Baton Relay has evolved into a powerful symbol of unity and diversity of the Commonwealth of Nations. With each games, the tradition of the relay grows in scale and significance – visiting more nations, involving more participants and generating more excitement than ever before.

The Kuala Lumpur 1998 Queen's Baton Relay was the first to deliver the relay to other nations of the Commonwealth, besides England and the host country.

The Manchester 2002 Queen's Jubilee Baton Relay visited 23 Commonwealth nations over an 87 day period and travelled more than 100,000 kilometres.

The Melbourne 2006 Queen's Baton Relay was the first Queen's Baton Relay to visit all 71 nations of the Commonwealth. This epic journey lasted one year and one day and covered a distance of more than 180,000 kilometres – taking the baton to the home of one third of the world's population.

The Queen's Baton Relay 2010 Delhi will commence at Buckingham Palace on 29 October 2009, and will end 340 days later at the Opening Ceremony of the XIX Commonwealth Games 2010 Delhi on 3 October 2010. During this 11 month period the baton will cover a distance in excess of 190,000 kilometres. This marathon event involves travelling for 240 days through the other 70 nations of the Commonwealth, before spending another 100 days visiting all the capital cities in India's 28 states and seven union territories, and many other cities along the way. The Queen's Baton Relay 2010 Delhi will be one of the longest relays in history.



For each games, the host country designs a unique baton.

For Kuala Lumpur 1998, the baton design was inspired by a traditional Malay artefact, the 'Gobek', which is a unique cylindrical areca nut-pounder widely used and displayed in Malay homes.

For Manchester 2002, the baton had special significance as it marked the Golden Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and was designed to symbolise the uniqueness of the individual and the common rhythm of humanity.

For Melbourne 2006, the baton harnessed the very latest in digital and other communication technology which enabled people across the globe to join the baton on its epic journey to the opening ceremony of the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games. The high tech baton tracking technology housed in Melbourne's baton allowed schoolchildren, adults, families and friends to pinpoint the baton's location via the Games website.

The Queen's Baton 2010 Delhi is a fusion of handcrafted elements interplayed with a precision engineered body, and ornamented with an intricate hand layered soil pattern. The shape and design of the baton is created using a triangular section of aluminium which has been twisted in the form of a helix and then coated with a diverse range of coloured soils collected from all corners of India.

The interweaving of coloured soils, including white sands, deep reds, warm yellows, dark browns and an array of other hues creates a very distinctive design, form and texture never before seen in the styling of a Queen's Baton. The very essence of India with its diversity and unrelenting endeavour towards a harmonious and progressive nation has shaped the inspiration of the baton. The Queen's Baton 2010 Delhi is a true Indian masterpiece.

