

(Northern Ireland, Iraq, the Falklands, Afghanistan) are remembered with two minutes silence at 11.00 a.m. The Queen, members of the Government and the armed forces attend together with thousands of military and civilian survivors of these conflicts. A large march is held at the Cenotaph in Whitehall, London. In many towns and villages a more simple yet dignified service is held around the local war memorial and wreaths of poppies are laid. The red poppy from Flanders fields is a poignant symbol of the millions who died in World War I.

**Burns Night** is celebrated in Scotland on the 25th January, when Burns suppers are held with haggis and toasts drunk to the famous poet Robert Burns.

## The social calendar

**The Boat Race** takes place each year during March in London. It is a contest between Oxford and Cambridge Universities and is held on the River Thames between Putney and Mortlake. Two rowing boats, each with eight oarsmen and a cox, race against each other.

**Chelsea Flower Show** takes place over five days in May at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, London SW3. It is organised by the Royal Horticultural Society and features more than 20 show gardens, all competing for prestigious awards.

**Royal Ascot Week** (in June) has been supported since 1768 by the Monarch for horse racing, tradition, pageantry and fashion. The British Royal family has a strong association with horse riding and racing. Ladies are expected to wear hats,

many gentlemen wear a morning suit and a top hat. In the Royal Enclosure, where only the most important guests are invited, the dress code is even stricter and sports clothing, jeans and shorts are strictly forbidden. Ascot has become popular with the upper classes, the nouveau riche (especially from Arab countries) and company sponsors of corporate hospitality.

**Henley Royal Regatta** is held in June / July at Henley-on-Thames. It features many international rowing races on the Thames, displays of historic launches, picnics, food, drink and many sideshows attended by the rich and famous. Gentlemen can be seen wearing the traditional striped blazer with straw boater hat whilst ladies wear the latest fashions.



*Henley-on-Thames is famous for the boating regatta.*

**Swan Upping** is also held on the Thames in July. Since the 12th century, the Monarch owns all unmarked swans in open waters and each year in July the Swan Uppers of the Vintners and Dyers Livery Company carry out a census of swans on the Thames while wearing their traditional colourful costumes. The birds are tagged and recorded.