



THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY Bath and District Branch

Dear Members and Friends,

I'd like to take this opportunity to review the society activities for 2022 and wish you a happy and prosperous 2023.

2022 was certainly a very busy year for the society and also a sad one with the loss of Her Majesty the Queen.

During the year we ran a wide range of local major events including our Heroes of the Commonwealth Service in Bath Abbey and an accompanying exhibition of artwork by 12 participating schools that celebrated the lives of Commonwealth citizens from around the world. The following reception at 44AD artspace welcomed guests of honour including our new Lord-Lieutenant of Somerset, the Mayor of Bath, a representative from the Indian High Commission and a representative from the family of one of our World War 2 Heroes. This event was covered briefly by the BBC Points West programme and an article in the Bath Chronicle. Here is a short film of the event:

<https://youtu.be/xqTQjWSN9q4>

Earlier in the year we held our second RCS Bath Art Competition which was a great success, attracting entries from children and adults from across the region. The exhibition was held at the 44AD artspace, then the Lord-Lieutenant Annie Maw arranged for some of the exhibits to be put on show at the Bath and West Showground. Can I at this point say a big thank you to Katie and Craig at 44AD who have provided so much support over this year and also to the Abbey for their help with the services. We are hoping to continue our association with them and build on our relationship.

Our late summer event at Bath Spa University included an excellent tour of the Newton Park estate and afterwards a very impressive lunchtime buffet. Also, in 2022 we planted a tree at the Little Willows Nursery to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and in November Anita our Vice Chair attended the High Commissioners Banquet at the Guildhall in London.

The recent Xmas lunch was a great success, and we were joined by students from Ghana and Nigeria. Our speaker was Ray Aldis the historian for the Nelson Society who spoke about Nelson's links with Bath and the Caribbean.



THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY
Bath and District Branch

This year we ran a full speaker programme which was very successful and will be continuing into 2023. We will shortly have confirmation of our programme for you which will include the Chief Operating Officer from the RCS, (postponed from 2022) and Navjot Sawhney who is involved with an amazing washing machine project. Mark Johnson, a relative of one of our Heroes of the Commonwealth will be joining us and also one of the organisers of the Commonwealth Games.

There will be an International Students Reception at the Mayor's Parlour at the beginning of February and an evening with students at Norland College in March. In the same month we will be having our annual Commonwealth Day Service in Bath Abbey and launching the 2024 Art Competition. We are now looking at ways in which we can move forward with our website and at the possibility of running online student forums during next year. There will be a major project in 2023 centred around Malawi which is linked with schools and Bath Spa University. We have launched a school grants proposal under the guidance of Alan our secretary and now have a scholarship set up at Norland.

Our President Annie Maw is standing down as her tenure as Lord-Lieutenant of Somerset has come to an end but we are pleased to announce that the new Lord-Lieutenant Mohammed Sadiq has agreed to take on the role of Acting President and we will need, under our constitution, to approve this at our AGM. We also welcome two new trustees Chris Cook and Craig Jenkins who joined us recently.

I must also thank all of the trustees for their hard work during 2022 and giving up a great deal of their time. They are quite amazing.

Thank you for your continued support of the society and we look forward to seeing you at our events in 2023.

Best wishes

Godfrey Hall, Chair.