

Dear Members and Friends,

I thought that it was an appropriate time to get in touch and bring you up to date with our programme of events and news.

On March 2nd Norland College are hosting an event to showcase their work and introduce students to the college facilities and the RCS. This will be an excellent opportunity for members to meet the students we are supporting and to thank the principal Dr. Janet Rose for her support of our society. There will be a limited number of places available to members, so if you would be interested in being included please let our secretary Alan Howe know asap. There is no charge for this event. We will then confirm your place. The reception and talk is due to start around 5.45pm and should be over by 8.00pm.

There will be a Commonwealth Day themed Service on March 10th at Bath Abbey when the Commonwealth Affirmations will be read out. This is to be followed by a reception at 44AD to launch our 2024 Art Competition. It has recently been confirmed that a Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Somerset will be attending the service and reception afterwards. We are approaching Tim Peake, the British astronaut about the possibility of presenting the art prizes in March 2024.

We are currently working with Kingswood School and Bath Spa University organising an exhibition called 'The Warm Heart of Africa' and will be sending out further details as this progresses.

Due to commitments, we have had to rearrange our speaker programme for 2023. However we still have a number of major contributors booked. On March 28th the Chief Operating Officer of the RCS Nathan McKenzie will be our guest at the Bath and County Club. This will be followed by a presentation on May 30th (tbc) by Kingswood School on their Malawi Connections and then on July 26th Louise Richards, who is involved in the Commonwealth Games, will be with us. At the end of September Mark Johnson (relative of one of our Heroes of the Commonwealth) is due to give a talk on the Commonwealth and hopefully our current Lord Lieutenant Mohammed Sadiq will be joining us at the end of November.

We are looking to stage a Diplomatic Dinner later in the year to which we hope to invite a number of Commonwealth High Commissioners. Some of you also might be interested in attending a service and meal which is organised by the

West Country branch of the Britain Australia Society in April around Anzac Day.

A plaque is being produced to go with the Platinum Jubilee Tree planted at the Little Willows Children's Nursery in Bath and we are also working on redesigning our website which should be up and running later in 2023. We are currently promoting an award which will be available to schools within the Bath post code who may be interested in carrying out a Commonwealth related project. if you know of any school that might be interested please contact our secretary Alan Howe with details . Also if you have any friends or colleagues who would like to join the society then please direct them initially to our website www.rcsbath.org.

A number of our trustees have recently been involved with Bath Spa University and visiting academics from the University of Malawi.

We are hoping to organise several social events this year and will keep you informed as things developed.

Can I at this point thank his Worshipful, the Mayor of Bath Rob Appleyard for his support and also Dr Janet Rose and staff at Norland College for their help in organising the student reception on March 2nd.

Best wishes

Godfrey Hall Chair.