

Dear Members and Friends,

I hope you are all well and have avoided catching Covid.

It has been a very busy time for us over the past few weeks and Anita and her team including Katie at 44AD artspace have been working extremely hard. The 2022 Art Competition culminated in a private viewing attended by a large number followed by the prize giving at 44AD when awards were given out by two of our Deputy Lord Lieutenants and the Mayor, Councillor June Player. Unfortunately, Michael Eavis was unable to attend due to Covid but sent his best wishes to all the prize winners.

The service which preceded the event was attended by over 200 people and included readings from a branch member and Commonwealth scholar. Commonwealth students and members also read out the Affirmations and prayers. The event was attended by two Deputy Lord Lieutenants and councillor June Player, the current Mayor of Bath. A large number of schools and private individuals in Bath took part in the year's competition which will be going on to be exhibited at the RUH and then the Bath and West Showground at Shepton Mallet later this year.

Our other recent event was the first in our series of talks which are being held at the Bath and County Club. Our first speaker was Karen Brewer, Secretary General of the CJMA whom I had known for many years. She gave a very enlightening talk which was followed by a lively question and answer session. The staff at the BCC were extremely good and provided us with an excellent lunch. Our next speaker will be John Strachan Pro-Vice Chancellor of Bath Spa University who is going to talk on their Commonwealth connections. This event is due to take place on May 26th and details on how to book accompany this newsletter. Our annual AGM will take place directly before the talk in the BCC at 11.30am.

We are currently investigating the possibility of a summer canal trip and will let you know further details as they arrive. We ran a similar event several years ago that included an excellent buffet and journey along the Kennet and Avon Canal.

I am also still talking with the RCS in Wales over a trip to Cardiff later this year.

We have received several Commonwealth grant applications in the past few weeks and are currently discussing ways in which we can become more involved with Commonwealth students at both universities and schools in Bath.

Anita and her team are presently working on the Heroes of the Commonwealth project and we have a number of schools in the Bath postcode who will be taking part. It is hoped to organise a service in the Abbey on November 11th together with an exhibition at 44AD.

We are also currently in discussion with a children's nursery in Bath concerning the planting of a tree to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and further information on this will be out soon. If you are in the Parade Gardens in Bath during the spring you might want to search out a tree the society planted to commemorate her Golden Jubilee. The plaque also celebrates a visit by the Gurkha Band.

The International RCS Branches Meeting is to be held in Australia later this year and currently information is with schools in Bath relating to the 2022 RCS Queens Essay Competition.

Sadly, my wife Sue will be standing down as a trustee. She has worked extremely hard during her time as a trustee and intends to continue being actively involved in the society. We will therefore be actively looking for a replacement.

I would also like to welcome new members who have joined recently including Mr.Seng Boon Chan.

If you should have any enquiries regarding the society, please do not hesitate to contact either our secretary Alan Howe or myself via our website. www.rcsbath.org.

Best wishes

Godfrey Hall Chair.