

Dear Member

I hope you are well and are adjusting to these changing times.

We have some exciting events coming up in our calendar which hopefully you will be able to enjoy.

On October 11<sup>th</sup> we have been invited by the West Country branch of the Britain-Australia Society to join them at an event to celebrate the birthday of Admiral Arthur Philip, the first Governor of New South Wales. This event starts at 10.30am at St Nicholas Church in Bathampton and further details can be found on our website [www.rcsbath.org](http://www.rcsbath.org). Hopefully you will be able to come along to the whole event, if not you are welcome to just join us for the service in the church at 11am, which will be in the presence of the High Commissioner of Australia.

Our second event is a special look behind the scenes at the training facilities at the University of Bath used by the Olympic athletes and those preparing to take part in next year's Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. This has been specially arranged by Stephen Baddeley, the Director of Sport, who will also be inviting some Commonwealth athletes to join us. A letter will be sent out shortly with further details.

On November 4<sup>th</sup> there will be the launch of our "Heroes of the Commonwealth" project, which will take place at 44AD artspace, 4 Abbey St (close to Bath Abbey) between 6 and 8pm. This is being organised by one of our trustees Anita St John Gray in conjunction with Katie at the gallery. We are hoping that our patron the mayor will attend this event.

On December 2<sup>nd</sup> we are having our Christmas lunch at the Bath Cricket Club, North Parade Road starting at 12.30pm. This had to be cancelled last year due to Covid-19, but due to popular demand it is now back on our calendar. Again, details will follow very soon.

We also have several other projects in the pipeline, including our 2022 Art Competition. Entitled "Hope and Humanity in the Commonwealth", this will be open to all those in the Bath postcode area. Working together with the Lord Lieutenant's office, we are discussing a Commonwealth Jubilee live tree planting event across the Commonwealth. Other possible projects include a Zoom Christmas event and a 2022 calendar. Lotte Veale is co-originating these last two projects and should you have any exceptional photographs taken around the Commonwealth please get in touch with her at [lottegraceveale@googlemail.com](mailto:lottegraceveale@googlemail.com) We are also hoping to set up a semi-permanent Commonwealth Art Exhibition at the Bath and West Showground in Somerset later next year.

After a recent meeting of the trustees, it was agreed that our membership fee will increase from October 2021 to be £5.00 for students and £10 for other members. This has been set at a much lower rate during the Covid-19 pandemic, but as things are now getting back onto a more even keel and we are organising more events we felt that this increase was justifiable. We now also required to pay an annual branch licence fee to the Royal Commonwealth Society. Alan will be getting in touch with members about subscriptions soon.

As always, we continue supporting Commonwealth students to both universities-and encouraging them to join the branch for what is little more than the cost of a large coffee!

Our new trustee Natasha Hopkins has now settled into her roll and is currently heading a Steering Group looking at branch policy and ways forward. It is hoped to introduce a programme of talks every couple of months in the near future and details of speakers and subjects should soon appear on our website.

Finally, I was privileged, on behalf of the branch, to recently attend the High Commissioners' Banquet at the Guildhall in the City of London, when I had the chance to speak to several High Commissioners, to Lord Howell the RCS president, to the Chief Operating Officer of the RCS in London and to members of the government about some of our projects and activities.

Can I at this point thank all of those of you who have provided such amazing support for our Commonwealth students in Bath during Covid-19 and helped make their lives so much more bearable in these difficult times.

As always please feel free to contact me or any member of our team via our website should you require any further information on the content of this newsletter.

Godfrey Hall

Chair