

CHOGM – The Queen’s Commonwealth Canopy

Commonwealth honours Her Majesty The Queen with a ‘Commonwealth Canopy’ Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, officially opening the 24th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Malta, said how delighted she was to receive a dedication of rainforests and other environmental projects for her service as Head of the Commonwealth over 60 years.

The Prime Minister of Malta, Dr. Joseph Muscat also welcomed the initiative in his speech at the opening ceremony.

Commonwealth countries such as Singapore, the outgoing Chair in Office of the Commonwealth, Sri Lanka, The United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, Zambia, and Belize have offered to dedicate and protect sensitive environmental areas in The Queen’s name, in a project called ‘The Queen’s Commonwealth Canopy’. From vast areas of rainforests to projects in small island states, this is a collaborative and positive drive by Commonwealth countries to show united action on the environment.

Her Majesty thanked Commonwealth heads for the initiative:

“I have been especially touched by one such project, The Queen’s Commonwealth Canopy, which has been proposed by Commonwealth countries wanting to harness their collective expertise and resources to protect the world’s forests. This and other initiatives are a practical demonstration of the power of the Commonwealth, working as a group, to effect real change for generations to come.” The Queen’s Commonwealth Canopy will be led by The Royal Commonwealth Society in partnership with NGO Cool Earth and The Commonwealth Forestry Association, with the aim of eventually linking all 53 Commonwealth countries in a canopy of sustainable forest conservation initiatives for future generations.

Just days before world leaders and 40,000 delegates from 195 countries met at the 2015 Paris Climate Conference (COP21), this initiative from the Commonwealth to preserve rainforests has been welcomed by environmental groups and forestry organisations.

Singapore will dedicate six hectares of rainforest in the Singapore botanic Gardens and 163 hectares of Singapore’s Bukit Timah Nature Reserve forest to The Queen’s Commonwealth Canopy.

The UK Government has announced that The National Forest Company is committed to supporting The Queen’s Commonwealth Canopy and will play a leading role as an international exemplar for the QCC. The National Forest Company leads the creation of The National Forest, a new, wooded landscape for the nation across 200 square miles of central England. The National Forest Company was established by Government in April 1995. It is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

The National Memorial Arboretum has strong Commonwealth links and is located within the National Forest. In 2016, the National Forest marks its 25th anniversary and will use this opportunity to support the UK’s contribution to The Queen’s Commonwealth Canopy.

Also supporting The Queen’s Commonwealth Canopy proposal, New Zealand is providing additional funding of \$1 million over three years to extend the network of QEII National Trust covenants. The protection of open space, including native forest remnants.

Australia will also join the QCC initiative by dedicating Commonwealth projects created through the development of the Asia-Pacific Rainforest Recovery Plan, which seeks to create a regional collective commitment to help slow, halt and reverse the loss of tropical rainforests.

For further details view the RCS web site www.thercs.org

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THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY
South Australia Branch

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President: Libby Ellis OAM Ph 0412 820 121

Secretary: Julie Gameau Ph 08 8357 9547



February 2016

– April 2016

Newsletter

The new banner for
South Australian Branch of the
Royal Commonwealth Society

PATRONS

Worldwide Patron

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

South Australian Patron:

His Excellency The Honourable Hieu Van Le AO
Governor of South Australia

President's report

It's Australia Day already! 2016 is almost one month through; and I think it is going to be an exciting year for the RCS.

Last year we celebrated the mile stone of the Queen becoming the longest reigning monarch in British and Australian history; this year we celebrate Her Majesty's 90th birthday. It will be great to meet fellow members of like associations, for the festivities.

The South Australian Branch is planning a busy year. This year as well as encouraging young people to submit essays to London, we will invite them to submit a copy to us for judging in South Australia. Unfortunately the London judges list the entries and therefore the winners by country only and we sometimes are not sure in which state a particular school is located, so we will run our own competition, in parallel. We are planning to coincide the timing of the Essay Competition with our successful Art and Photographic Competitions; that way we can not only save on postage we can hold a major combined prize giving event midyear.

The RSC Ensemble continues to win critical acclaim. Our next concert will be on 1st May. There will be more details in our next Newsletter, but mark the date in your diaries.

We have invited the Honorary Consuls from Sri Lanka and Tanzania to become Honorary Fellows of the RCS and we look forward to working with Dr Charitha Perera (Democratic Socialist Republic of *Sri Lanka*) and Mr Sossy Msomi (United Republic of Tanzania) together with Mr Ian Smith (United Kingdom) to develop closer relationships with other Commonwealth countries.

The second national RCS meeting is being held in Canberra over the Anzac Day weekend. The meeting last year in Melbourne was a useful introductory one and I look forward to building on that in April.

An international RCS meeting is planned for 4-7 October this year in London. The ACT Branch and the London meeting have both allocated the first day to a Youth Meeting. We in South Australia do not yet have a developed youth section, and are looking at ways to convert entrants in our various competitions and other young leaders into active participants in our Society so we can have young representatives at future National and International meetings. If any of you have children or grandchildren, or possibly even great grandchildren, whom you think may be interested in becoming involved with the RCS, please ask them to contact us.

To you all, may I wish you a happy, healthy and safe 2016

Libby Ellis OAM



THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY
(SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH)

Members are all invited to attend

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

to be held on

Sunday 3rd April 2016

at 2.30pm

at Wheaton House

190 South Terrace Adelaide

Come and hear what the society has done for the last 12 months and the plans for the next 12 months.

Fellowship and refreshments will follow the meeting

Apologies and further details please contact the

President: Libby Ellis Ph 0412 820 121

or

Secretary, Julie Gameau 8357 9547

RCS Council

The officers of the Society shall consist of the President, two Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer and up to five Councillors.(Clause 13.1)

Any one who wishes to be nominated for the Council please contact either the President, Libby Ellis or the Secretary Julie Gameau

Branch Council Members 2016

President:	Libby Ellis OAM	0412 820 121
Vice President:	Margaret Lord	(08) 8346 7952
Vice President	Jayne Ross	(08) 8346 6002
Treasurer:	Ken Pennell	0408067480
Secretary:	Julie Gameau	(08) 8357 9547
Councillors:	Chris Ashton	0419 804 725
	Terry Grant	(08) 8333 1658
	Allan Perryman	0418 821 572
	Des Wyatt	(08) 8281 7594

Please contact the above members for any information regarding the activities and news of the Royal Commonwealth Society (South Australian Branch)

MEMBERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH

The following Countries are members of the Commonwealth in order of seniority of membership

United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Ghana, Malaysia, Nigeria, Cyprus, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, Malta, Zambia, The Gambia, Singapore, Guyana, Botswana, Lesotho, Barbados, Nauru, Mauritius, Swaziland, Tonga, Samoa, Fiji Islands, Bangladesh, The Bahamas, Grenada, Papua New Guinea, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Dominica, St Lucia, Kiribati, St Vincent & The Grenadines, Vanuatu, Belize, Antigua & Barbuda, Maldives, St Christopher & Nevis, Brunei Darussalam, Namibia, Cameroon, Mozambique, Rwanda

These diverse nations representing one quarter of the world's population over every continent, include Republics, National Monarchies and a number of Nations that recognise Queen Elizabeth 11 as their own Head of State.

RCS Christmas Party 2015

Our Branch held our Annual Christmas Party in Wheaton House at Pulteney Grammar, in the first week of December. The catering was its usual high standard and we were entertained by members of the RCS Ensemble.

Among the members and guests were Art teachers from Seacliff Primary School and Pembroke. These two schools submitted many entries in our Photographic and Art Competitions, as we thought that as the winning students had been acknowledged, we should acknowledge the teachers who encouraged and inspired them.

We entertained guests from many of our 'sister' Associations and have discussed more ways in which we can participate more closely with each other. In return for our invitation to the Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship, I was invited to their Christmas party, held in the same location a week or so later and also very enjoyable.

A special guest was Dr Charitha Perera, Honorary Consul of Sri Lanka, who ceremoniously cut the fabulous Christmas cake provided by past President Margaret Lord.

The Christmas Party was also the first use of our new RCS banners. Incorporating the new RCS logo, which always makes me think of the Olympic rings all dancing together, the banners will feature at all future RCS events. Libby Ellis

Commonwealth Day Reception

Members and friends are invited to the Commonwealth Day Reception at Wyatt Hall Pulteney Grammar School on Monday 21st March at 5.15pm.

The Governor of South Australia, His Excellency, The Honourable Hieu Van Le AO and Mrs Le will be in attendance.

Vice Regal reception 6.00pm
Tickets \$25 each

For further enquiries and tickets please contact Margaret Lord

New member

A very warm welcome is extended to Lyn Varcoe.

We wish you a long and happy association with the Society and look forward to seeing you at future functions



DESALYNE DANCERS

The Desalyne Dancers Concert, celebrating 50 wonderful years, was held at the Scott Theatre, Adelaide, Saturday November 28th, 2015, with a Commemorative Program, and a Gold Ticket, as pictured.

The Program featured a very interesting walk down memory lane, in which Des's sister Desme White and her friend Alan Campbell opened years before, and a 16 year old Des took over, and re-opened the school, after it had been closed.

Des's sister and mother had been members of the Royal Commonwealth Society, for many many years,

and often held old world dances at the Royal Commonwealth Society, which were wonderful, until they both have since passed away, Desme Des's sister, in 2001. Many students at the school have gone on to have fantastic dance careers - Some opened their own schools, while others have gone on to join the Australian Ballet Company, Melbourne Dance Theatre, and some, all the way to London to perform on the West End.

The Desalyne Dancers have a rich heritage of producing quality dancers, and creating life-long friendships, with many of it's teachers having danced with the school for 20 years or more, you can see how it is more than a school, it is a family. Congratulations to Des and the team on a Fantastic 50 years, and a very wonderful and enjoyable concert to a full house, and of course it was glittered with gold.

Jayne Mary Ross.

Royal Commonwealth Society Ensemble Concert

Sunday May 1 at 3.00pm at Flinders Street Baptist church Adelaide Tickets at the door.

Music featuring Four Seasons by Vivaldi

Iranian Seasons by Amir Eslami Mirabadi

Trio Elegiaque No1 by Rachmaninov

Come and spend Sunday afternoon relaxing and listening to wonderful chamber music.

DIARY DATES

Co-Opera
Mikado Thomas Edmonds
Opera Studio in the Show
Grounds
6,7,8,May and 13,14,15,May

Monday March 21st 5.15pm
Wyatt Hall Pulteney
Commonwealth Day
Reception
Sunday April 3 RCS AGM
2.30 Wheaton Hall Pulteney

Sunday May 1 RCS Ensemble
Concert Flinders Street

The 90th Birthday of HM The Queen

As Head of the Commonwealth, The Queen is highly regarded across the Commonwealth. She has served the modern Commonwealth of Nations in this way for most of its history and continues to attend Heads of Government Meetings and ceremonial occasions such as the London Commonwealth Day celebrations. Her 90th Birthday is due to be marked in May and June and many Commonwealth dignitaries and organisations will join in the celebrations. The official events include a Patron's Lunch to celebrate The Queen's patronage of over 600 organisations in the UK and around the Commonwealth, including the Royal Commonwealth Society. Her Majesty's commitment to the Commonwealth will no doubt continue to inspire this diverse network throughout 2016 and beyond.

Commonwealth Day 2016

This year the annual celebration of the Commonwealth, Commonwealth Day, will fall on Monday 14th March and will be celebrated around the Commonwealth. In London the Royal Commonwealth Society will once again co-ordinate a special multi-faith celebration at Westminster Abbey to be attended by Her Majesty The Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, High Commissioners, dignitaries from around the Commonwealth and specially invited guests, as well as 1,000 young people. The Commonwealth Day Service will help launch the Commonwealth theme for 2016: 'An Inclusive Commonwealth'. The theme emphasises the Commonwealth's strength in working together to achieve progress. Including the full diversity of people in society is increasingly a necessity in stimulating development and fostering community resilience. The theme allows for further reflection on these ideas.

A New Commonwealth Secretary-General

One of the biggest events of 2015 was the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in Malta. A highlight was the election of a new Secretary-General, Baroness Scotland, nominated by Dominica. Baroness Scotland brings international, legislative, legal and government experience to the running of the Commonwealth. She was the first ever woman to be made Attorney General in the UK and has a career that spans the UK and the Caribbean. She is due to take office in the spring of this year and has stated that she wants to support member states to build development and democracy. A challenge will be to keep members unified while making sure the Commonwealth continues to be relevant to governments and people alike in a crowded international arena.

Thank you from Anglicare SA

Anglicare thanks RCS members for their generous donations of food and gifts to the Christmas Appeal. Anglicare was able to provide hampers to hundreds of people in need around South Australia.

Below is a story about a family Anglicare helped this Christmas.

"On 23 December a lady came in with her seven year old daughter. She had never sought help before but an incident of domestic violence meant that she and her daughter were now staying with friends. Mrs A had the police go with her to the family home and found that most of their belongings and all the Christmas presents had been destroyed.

Mrs A said that she would need to tell her daughter about Father Christmas. She had dreaded this as she thought her daughter had already lost much of her childhood.

Whilst the little girl was entertained in the reception area her mother was helped to sneak a boogie board, books, a board game, Christmas food and lollies.

Mrs A was very grateful. As they left the child said to the mother "You were gone for a long time. The lady gave me a drink. What did we come for?"

That is the work of Anglicare - but we couldn't do it with out you.

VALE

The South Australian Branch of the Royal Commonwealth Society sends condolences to the families of **Mary Evins OBE and Lloyd Wiggins DSO DFC**. These members were loyal long term supporters of the RCS.

Mary was involved in charity work including the YWCA, Meals on Wheels and Crippled Children's Home.

Mary was also a great supporter of the Royal Society of St George.

Lloyd was a great war hero. He operated his own auctioneering house Lloyd Wiggins & Co. He was a supporter of Legacy.

Lloyd attended many AGM's of the RCS and always gave good advice on constitutional and meeting matters.

INTERNATIONAL MEETING

A number of branches have expressed interest in attending the International meeting planned for October 2016 in London. This will take place in the first week of October. The plan is for a full day's Youth programme on Tuesday 4th with the Full programme running from Wednesday 5th – Friday 7th lunchtime. London is keen to hear from branches as to their interests for the various sessions.

The Commonwealth in 2016

2015 saw impressive international agreements made at the COP21 climate change talks in Paris, new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) finalised in New York and new initiatives launched at the **Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting** in Malta. For global policy makers 2016 will be a year of implementation to make these agreements real. Conversations on the SDGs will turn to how achievement of the goals can be monitored and measured. Policy makers now have to follow through on commitments to lower carbon emissions. Commonwealth governments will be working with the Commonwealth Secretariat to support the creation and operation of the newly agreed Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub, Commonwealth Small States Centre of Excellence and Countering Violent Extremism Unit.

COMMONWEALTH VOICES - December Edition

This very interesting magazine is published by the London RCS

It contains interesting articles, reports and guest contributions on Commonwealth-wide news, a coverage of CHOGM an interview with the new Secretary-General and news of the Queen's Commonwealth Canopy initiative.

For South Australian RCS members the December issue of Commonwealth Voices is not to be missed! There is an article about the way in which we have been engaged with youth locally – CHECK IT OUT.

<https://www.thercs.org/assets/Magazines/CWVoices-Issue4-Web2.pdf>

Queen's Young Leaders' Programme

Each year from 2014 to 2018, 60 inspirational young people are selected to receive an Award and become 'Queen's Young Leaders' – one for every year that The Queen had served as Head of the Commonwealth at the time of her Diamond Jubilee. The aspiration is for at least one young person from every Commonwealth country to receive a Queen's Young Leaders Award for achievement in transforming their own lives and the lives of others.

The Queen's Young Leaders of 2016

Thousands of applications have flooded in since the programme was launched. Now in its second year, The Queen's Young Leaders of 2016 have been selected from across the Commonwealth.

Applications re-commence in June 2016 to become a Queen's Young Leader 2017

Check out this web site

<http://www.royal.gov.uk/MonarchAndCommonwealth/QueenandCommonwealth/WhatisaCommonwealthRealm.aspx>

It is the official web site of the British monarchy

The Ode

We of the Royal Commonwealth Society shall continue to foster goodwill and affection between peoples of the Commonwealth so that all may live together in peace, sympathy and understanding

Objects of the Royal Commonwealth Society

The objects of the society are to promote the increase and diffusion of knowledge respecting the people and Countries of the Commonwealth, to maintain the best traditions of the Commonwealth and to foster unity of thought and action to matters of common interest



The SA President Libby Ellis OAM presenting a cheque from the South Australian Branch of the RCS to Claudine Butterworth for the Ian Wilson Memorial Fellowship Fund for the May Gibbs Children's Literature Trust Fund.

Ian Wilson was a life member of the South Australian Branch and will always be remembered by members for his support and wise advice especially on constitutional matters.

RCS and the Commonwealth web pages

There is so much interesting and informative information on the Royal Commonwealth Society on the web site.

Find more information about The Royal Commonwealth Society and the Commonwealth on the web

- www.thercs.org
- www.thecommonwealth.org
- www.thercssa.com.au

**Royal Commonwealth Essay Competition
'AN INCLUSIVE COMMONWEALTH'**

This year's theme invites young people to think about whether or not it is possible to be living responsibly and tolerantly in an increasingly interconnected Commonwealth.

Through the world's oldest schools' international writing competition, the Royal Commonwealth Society provides an opportunity for young people to share their stories and have their voices heard.

JUNIOR CATEGORY

Born after 1st May 2002 (under 14 years)

- 1 Imagine inviting a stranger to your country. How would you welcome them?
- 2 My ideal community.
- 3 Are we really so different?
- 4 Tales of an 'insider/outsider'

SENIOR CATEGORY

Born between 2nd May 1997 and 1st May 2002 (14-18 years)

- 1 Let them in.
- 2 How can you balance the needs of the individual with the needs of the crowd?
- 3 The wealth we have in common.
- 4 Is it possible to have an inclusive and tolerant society?

ENTER BY 1ST MAY 2016

GUIDELINES

To enter the competition, you must be living in, or a national of, a Commonwealth country or territory. All entries must be in English and are to be submitted online at www.thercs.org.

Participants are encouraged to be creative in their responses. Answers can be submitted in a number of formats, for example a poem, letter, folk tale, script or essay – the choice is yours.

Please visit www.thercs.org for full terms and conditions.

AWARDS

There will be a Winner and Runner-up in each category. Winners and Runnersup will be flown to London for a week of cultural and educational visits, culminating in a special award event. All four top entries will be published by the RCS.

A number of Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards will be made in both the Junior and Senior categories; participants who do not receive an award will be entitled to a certificate of participation

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT to SOUTH AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS

South Australian students who send a copy of their entry to the RCS PO Box 7013, 190 Hutt Street, Adelaide 5000 will be judged by a South Australian panel of judges and will be eligible for prizes donated by the South Australian Branch of the Royal Commonwealth Society and will be invited to an Award Reception.

**2016 subscriptions are due on 1st January 2016
Please pay the Treasurer**