



THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY

Victoria Branch

Commonwealth News

We will take a leading role in achieving a fairer world for Commonwealth citizens by connecting, convening and equipping people to advance the values of the Commonwealth.



Welcome to the May 2020 edition of the RCS Victoria Commonwealth News. Our year has continued on and we have managed to continue working in the back ground to ensure the RCS Branch is positioned to recommence our great work supporting the Victorian community.

The Council have been busy planning a range of contingency

options so that we are able to acknowledge the all the things that are important to us. As we continue to navigate these extraordinary times, we take the time to remind ourselves of the 16 Core Values of the Commonwealth of Nations and remember those who are struggling during this time

We look forward to seeing you soon.

Patrons

Worldwide: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Victoria: Her Excellency The Honourable Linda Dessau AC Governor of Victoria

MAY 2020

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We want to improve the lives and prospects of all Commonwealth citizens

A history in common, a future in progress

The Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS) is a network of individuals and organisations committed to improving the lives and prospects of Commonwealth citizens across the world. Through youth empowerment, education and high-level advocacy, the Society champions the importance of literacy, equality and inclusion, the environment and connected communities across the Commonwealth's 54 member nations. The

Society's unique position within the Commonwealth family allows it to play a pivotal role in convening and connecting the Commonwealth's political and diplomatic representatives, as well as industry, civil society, academic and business leaders, on a wide range of issues. Founded in 1868, the RCS is non-partisan, independent of governments and relies on public generosity to achieve its mission.

Presidential Update



What a strange and testing time we find ourselves in. Like all RCS branches and communities across the world we are trying to grapple with the impact of covid-19.

Here in Victoria we will be cancelling our usual queen's birthday celebration as per HM's wishes. It is hoped we can make our return function in July; at which time we will recognise HM's birthday.

During this down time at the gables the council has organised some remedial work to the front of our

magnificent building, a new cool room has been added and stainless-steel bench tops in the kitchen.

You will have received some notices from Simon Janesch, who has been appointed as our new business manager to handle the day to day operations.

In 2021 we will be celebrating our 100-year history in Victoria, refer to stop press notice.

I hope all of you are not feeling too isolated, and are able to carry out your day to day activities. If anyone is in need of help or just a talk, we are available, all you need to do is ring and your privacy will be safe.

Keep safe,

Lloyd, president.

RCS Victoria.

STOP PRESS!!!! MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENT!!!!

2021 promises to be a big year for The Royal Commonwealth Society Victoria Branch

We have just received advice from RCS London that our proposal to host the next International Meeting (IM) of the RCS in October 2021 has been accepted.

There are over 80 branches from 54 Commonwealth countries representing 2.5 billion people with 30% under 25. We are looking forward to seeing as many countries represented as possible. This presents as a unique opportunity to show case the amazing work we do here in Victoria and the wonderful attractions we are fortunate to enjoy.

In conjunction with the 2021 IM we will also be celebrating the Centenary of RCS Victoria. This major milestone will be celebrated in various ways in the lead up to the IM.

Both events will take significant work to organise and deliver. We are currently calling

on some of our fellows to volunteer and assist with the organisation of these important events. If you would like to offer your assistance, please contact the RCS Victoria Branch office.

Thank you.

Your RCS Victoria Branch Council.



Women's Group News for May 2020

It is with regret that the Women's Group Committee, in keeping with the directive of the RCS Council and the Government, have cancelled the May luncheon and are unable to undertake any fund raising activities until further notice. Aware that money is in short supply at present, however, should anyone wish to give to the RCS charitable fund, which the Women's Group supports, please send donations to: CBA, BSB no: 063 -301 Acc no: 10486533 or by cheque to PO Box 31 Caulfield East Victoria 3145.

The Women's Group Committee trusts all members are well and safe and are able to purchase the necessary food etc you require. If anyone has questions, requires assistance or

advice, or just wants to make contact with someone while isolated, you may contact me, Elisabeth, by email: elisabeth_mn@hotmail.com

Alternatively contact the RCS Victoria. Once the crisis is over we look forward to welcoming you all back to the Gables. Stay well and safe.

Elisabeth Newman AM
Women's Group Convener

The Queen tells Commonwealth 'we will succeed' in fight against coronavirus

In a rare televised address, The Head of the Commonwealth, Queen Elizabeth II, has said "we will succeed" in the fight against the coronavirus.

She said: "While we have faced challenges before, this one is different. This time we join with all nations across the globe in a common endeavour, using the great advances of science and our instinctive compassion to heal. We will succeed - and that success will belong to every one of us."

"Across the Commonwealth and around the world, we have seen heart-warming stories of people coming together to help others, be it through delivering food parcels and medicines, checking on neighbours, or converting businesses to help the relief effort."

In what is described as an "ambitious message to inspire", she said: "I hope in the years to come everyone will be able to take pride in how they responded to this challenge."

She urged Commonwealth citizens to deal with the pandemic with self-discipline and resolve, saying: "Better days will return."

In her very personal message, she also thanked frontline doctors and nurses, care workers and those carrying out essential roles.

Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland described The Queen's message as an "anchor in increasingly turbulent times".

She said: "The Queen has dedicated her life to tireless service to the Commonwealth through the ever-enduring values that she represents and promotes through the pages of our history."

"Her address unites our 2.4 billion citizens to stand together in solidarity and strength as one family under one identity and encourages the 54 member countries to deliver a coordinated response to achieve one common goal of ending this pandemic everywhere."



COVID-19, a disease caused by a novel coronavirus, is spreading across the Commonwealth at an alarming rate. As of 4 April 2020, there are about 60,000 confirmed cases and more than 4,000 deaths within the Commonwealth.

The Secretary-General said: "The window of opportunity is still open for Commonwealth countries, the choices our leaders and our citizens make today will have a significant impact on how soon life can return to normal."

Source: <https://thecommonwealth.org/media/news/queen-tells-commonwealth-we-will-succeed-fight-against-coronavirus>

News from around the Commonwealth



Postponement of CHOGM 2020 due to Covid-19

21 April 2020

As a result of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, it is necessary to postpone the 26th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) scheduled to take place in Kigali, Rwanda on 22 – 27 June 2020.

The 26th CHOGM and associated events will be held in Kigali at a time to be announced in due course. This decision was made in accordance with the 2005 Memorandum of Understanding Establishing the Commonwealth Secretariat and the CHOGM Technical Manual, as well as with precedent.

His Excellency Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda said, "In the coming months, every Commonwealth nation will be fully focused on combatting Covid-19 and its socio-economic impact on our people. Our organisation's deep reservoirs of solidarity and expertise will be invaluable tools as we work together globally to ensure no country is left behind. We look forward to welcoming the Commonwealth family to Kigali for CHOGM once the pandemic has been defeated."

Commonwealth Secretary-General, The Rt. Hon. Patricia Scotland QC said, "The COVID-19 Pandemic has changed the course of our modern history. Lives have been lost, economies are shrinking, and livelihoods have been shattered. It is difficult to predict what the new normal will look like. We must be mindful of the risks large meetings pose to all. The current circumstances require heroic decisions. We stand together with Rwanda, and thank all our member countries and, in particular the United Kingdom as our Chair in Office, who have suffered so grievously, for the support and commitment they have shown in these trying times. I too warmly look forward to reuniting with the Commonwealth family, face-to-face, in the beautiful country of Rwanda."

CONTACT DETAILS



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Banking details

General and function banking

CBA, BSB no: 063 -301 Acc
no: 10483586

Donations and charitable giving

CBA, BSB no: 063 -301 Acc
no: 10486533

EFTPOS is now available at
all functions