



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 April edition of RCS Victoria Branch Commonwealth News. Our year of celebrations for our 100th birthday have started well with many more events and functions to come. This month we are continuing our timeline with the 1940's featured in this issue. With the changes in COVID restrictions, we can connect with many of the people and groups we have missed over the last 12 months. It has been wonderful seeing people return and we look forward to more in the future.

Patrons

Worldwide: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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

APRIL 2021

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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.

Presidents Report

Dear Members and Fellows,
It is hard to believe that another month has passed. Our March Commonwealth Day Dinner was extraordinarily successful with over 70 guests enjoying a fun night. Our 1920's theme to Celebrate our 100 years since our founding provided many pleasant surprises with many guests arriving in 1920's costumes. Honoured guests of the night included The British Consul for Victoria, Mr. Steff Lysaght & New Zealand's Consul Ms Vanessa O'Neill, we sincerely thank them for their valued support. Ms Loretta Simmons once again provided us with a huge range of gifts for our successful raffle, and Mr James McCarthy donated the decorations for the evening, and I thank them for their support. April dinner will be our ANZAC function with guest speaker Mr Dean Lee, CEO of the Shrine of Remembrance. There is a 1940's theme for this evening to continue with our Centenary Celebrations.
I hope all of you are enjoying our new sense of freedom and I hope that the current success with

COVID continues, and I look forward to another successful dinner.

Lloyd Byrne
President
RCS Victoria



ANNOUNCEMENTS

APRIL DINNER

Anzac Day Celebration
DATE: Thursday 8th April 2021
TIME: 6:30pm - Drinks & Canapés on arrival,
Dinner & Dessert
COST: \$65 Members \$75 Guests
THEME: 1940's War Theme with guest speaker
Mr Dean Lee
RSVP: by 2nd April 2021. Please email Simon on
admin@rcsvic.org or phone 0419 378 991

2021 EVENTS CALANDAR

MAY LUNCHEON

13th May 2021 The Gables 12:30pm
1950's theme including The Queen's Coronation

EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (EGM)

RCS Library (rear of "the Gables"), 15 Finch Street,
Malvern East on Thursday the 13th of May 2021,
commencing at 12:10 pm.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF ST GEORGE VICTORIA BRANCH

116th Annual St Georges Day Celebration
Thursday 22nd April 2021 6:30pm for 7:00pm start
The Gables 15 Finch St, Malvern East Victoria 3053

\$85.00 pp

RSVP: 15th April 2021 to RCS 0395715688 or

rsstgmelbourne@gmail.com

Attire: lounge, medals/decorations may be worn

All proceeds go to the Queen Elizabeth Centre



Women's Group Message

We hope to welcome many of you at the second luncheon in this year of celebration on Thursday 13th May at 12.30 for 1 o'clock start. The plan is to celebrate the birthdays of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and His Royal Highness, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, with Loretta Simmons as speaker. If you can find something to wear that gives a forties look, please wear it. It is amazing what one can find in one's wardrobe.

The Women's Group Committee thank you all for the great support for our fund-raising raffle which raised over \$600 at the Commonwealth Day Dinner

We also wish to thank The Rushdale Hotel and Gracie Greco Restaurant for their generous donations of Vouchers which have contributed to our successful raffle results.

Elisabeth Newman
Women's Group Convener



Royal Commonwealth Society Victoria Branch Historical Highlights – 1940's

A World at War

The decade started as the last one had ended with the world at war. The Royal Empire Society saw many of its members and members of their families leave home to defend our nation and our Empire. The Society continued its work promoting the benefits of a united Empire and in communicating the wars impacts back to Britain.



Our New Home

In 1947, the Royal Empire Society Victoria Branch purchased its first home at 101 Queen Street Melbourne. Funds for the purchase were made through donations, bequests and fund raising activities. This purchase gave the Society its first true place it could deliver its work from. The building served as a meeting place as well as hosting functions and lectures.



1940

1945

1947

1949

Victoria Celebrates WWII

The war was finally over and Melbourne and Australia celebrated the victory. At the same time we remembered those who had given their lives for our freedom. The Society in Melbourne paid tribute to those lost and injured in the war and provided support to their families.



Being Noticed

Victoria and Melbourne had continued to grow. Following the war there was more interest than ever in the need for a united empire. The Society welcomed Victoria's new Governor Sir Dallas Brooks at a formal function. Melbourne was announced as the host of the 1956 Olympics, placing us at the front of a global stage.



News from around The Commonwealth



Commonwealth Secretary-General congratulates Bangladesh on Golden Jubilee anniversary

Statement by: Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland

It is my privilege to convey the congratulations of the wider Commonwealth family to the people of Bangladesh as we join in celebrating fifty years since independence.

We have witnessed impressive progress in Bangladesh over the past fifty years to advance the wellbeing of the people of the nation – from improving health, sanitation, financial inclusion, and women’s political representation, to progressing commitments and showing leadership in addressing the impacts of climate change and advocating environmental protection. I am especially pleased to note that Bangladesh leads the way on gender parity ratings in South Asia.

Since joining the Commonwealth in 1972 the year following independence, Bangladesh has participated as a committed and much-valued member of our Commonwealth family. The government, people and institutions of the nation contribute in practical and visionary ways to collaboration among our 54 member countries on a broad range of issues, from connectivity and trade to women’s rights, sport, climate action and ocean governance. Bangladeshi people have made many contributions to our collective advocacy and action on contemporary and emerging global challenges. A splendid example of this is our 2021 Commonwealth Young Person of Year, Faysal Islam, who is from Bangladesh. He was selected from among more than 1,000 nominations to be recognised in this way for his initiative in developing and delivering a project providing low-cost ambulances and medical care to rural people. Faysal demonstrates ingenuity as well as those distinctive characteristics of Commonwealth cooperation - concern and commitment to the poorer, the weaker and the more vulnerable people of our countries and communities.

Leaders and representatives of other Commonwealth nations will be joining with the people of Bangladesh in the celebrations this week. This is a true reflection of what we hold dear in the Commonwealth – that we are a family of nations.

During the past fifty years, and particularly in recent months, we have been through challenging times. Even with the current severe economic and social disruption and necessary restrictions on travel and public gatherings because of COVID-19, I sincerely hope the Government and people of Bangladesh people will enjoy a memorable and uplifting 50th Independence Day as they unite in celebration of their achievement in building a strong, inclusive, vibrant and resilient nation.

CONTACT DETAILS



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Banking details

General & function banking

Commonwealth Bank
BSB: 063 -301
A/C: 10483586

Donations & charitable giving

Commonwealth Bank
BSB: 063 -301
A/C: 10486533

EFTPOS/Credit Cards is
available at all functions.