



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 August 2021 edition of RCS Victoria Branch Commonwealth News.

Our July Black Tie dinner was very successful just before restrictions enforced a 10-day lockdown in Victoria. We hope as many as possible can attend the luncheon Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> August.

Our timeline of the 100 years of RCS Victoria continues with the 1980's featured in this issue.

Please stay safe and look out for those who maybe needing extra care during these tough times.

Worldwide: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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

## August 2021

### Contents



The Presidents Report

2



Announcements

2



Women's Group Message

3



RCS Vic Historic Highlights  
1980's

3



News from around the  
Commonwealth

4



Contact and banking  
details

4

*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 Fellows, Members & friends,

For those who attend our July Dinner I'm sure you will agree we had a great night.

During restrictions our Centenary Committee met online to continue planning of our year of celebrations. The next few months are certainly not to be missed with 1980's and 90's themed events as well as our October Gala Dinner.

Our October celebratory dinner we are planning a silent auction with a couple of high-end prizes, we have some ideas however I ask all of you if you have connections that could assist, please let me know.

October we are also hosting a National Meeting with attendees from our neighbouring states develop a national framework for the RCS in Australia.

Our 'Gables on Finch' venture is progressing & due to open its doors to events of all descriptions as well as the tea rooms with high teas. We are asking all members to keep us in mind if they hear of any large furniture items which may be donated to this magnificent mansion. We have plenty of floor & wall space which is in need of filling.

Please stay safe and hope that our restrictions are not imposing any undue stress.

Lloyd Byrne  
President  
RCS Victoria



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 2021 EVENTS CALENDAR

#### AUGUST LUNCHEON

WHERE: Gables on Finch

'The Gables' 15 Finch St Malvern East

GUEST SPEAKER: Mr John Barnes, Rotarian

DATE: Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2021

TIME: 12:00pm

THEME: 1980's

COST: \$50/\$60

RSVP: Friday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021

please email Simon on [admin@rcsvic.org](mailto:admin@rcsvic.org)

**Webinar:** Launch of the 2021 Global Youth Development Index Report

**Date:** 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021 11am London GMT

The Commonwealth Secretariat will unveil its flagship report on global youth development on 10 August 2021. Follow this link to join:

<https://thecommonwealth.org/media/event/event-launch-2021-global-youth-development-index-report>

#### SEPTEMBER DINNER

DATE: Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2021

GUEST SPEAKER: Mr Josh Wanganen, from Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Assoc

SUBJECT: Reconciliation & treaty in Victoria

**Title:** National Wattle Day

**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021

Wattle Day is a day of celebration in Australia on the first day of September each year, which is the official start of the Australian spring

# Women's Group Message

We very much look forward to greeting many of you at the next luncheon on 12th August at midday for 12.30 start. Our guest speaker for the day is Mr John Barnes from the Rotary Club of Clayton. John has a fascinating career in which he looks forward to sharing with us including his positions held in various societies & committees such as the Paul Harris Society, the Bequest Society & also a Major Donor to The Rotary Foundation. He has served on the District Vocational & International Committees & was Chair of the District International Committee.

In February 2019 John and wife Gaye were presented with the Rotary Foundation Trustees Regional Service Award for a Polio Free World for their work in India since 2013. John & Gaye have attended 4 National Immunisation days in India, first in 2009 in Hyderabad & later in 2013, 2014 and 2017 in Moradabad.

John is also a member of Interplast, ANZ's Committee of Rotarians. Having been associated with Interplast since 1999 & a Board Member from 2002 – 2014 & active in establishing Interplast as a program in all Australian & later New Zealand Districts & is now an Interplast Company Member & an Honoured Member of Interplast. Please try to attend the luncheon to welcome John Barnes, & learn of some of the wonderful work the Rotary

undertakes, not only in Australia but, elsewhere in the world. Many of you will remember the support we gave to the Rotary Club of Chadstone East Malvern with their work in the Popondetta area of Papua New Guinea.

Our centenary celebrations continue this month, our August luncheon we encourage you to dress in the 1980's theme. I ask all attending the luncheon to bring an item or two of memorabilia dating from the 1980's. We had a very successful July dinner with our raffle raising \$265. Many thanks to all who supported the raffle & to Loretta Simmons for preparing the items. As we continue to live in uncertain times, life must go on regardless of restrictions. For our own wellbeing & good health, it is imperative we keep a positive outlook on life. We are fortunate to be in Australia, each lockdown we have more time to take note of our surrounds such as the birds, flowers & other fauna & flora; also get to know the people within our immediate neighbourhood. If any of you are in the need of support, please feel free to contact me.

Elisabeth Newman AM  
 Women's Group Convenor  
[elisabeth\\_mn@hotmail.com](mailto:elisabeth_mn@hotmail.com)  
 ph 03 9699 9170

## Royal Commonwealth Society Victoria Branch Historical Highlights – 1980's

### A Connected Group

The Melbourne Branch became the Victoria Branch of the Royal Commonwealth Society. This unified the members across the state and enables a greater range of activities. The Victoria Branch offered "Club Nights" on a Wednesday at The Gables to enable members to catch up regularly.



### Promoting Our Best

In 1986, the Victoria Branch was asked assist in the hosting of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh's 6th Commonwealth Study Conference. The conference connected business, trade unions & government to discuss their needs & aspirations. In 1987 the Branch ran a series of lectures covering English History, Mediaeval Manuscripts, Art, Archaeology & Literature. In 1988 the Branch conducted a number of Bi-Centennial Celebrations.



1980-2



1983-5

### Refining Our Focus

In 1983 our Branch hosted and contributed to a number of key lectures and seminars. These included topics of The Australian Identity and Pioneering Australian Women. In 1985 the Branch confirmed the principles of The Commonwealth of Nations which included: International Peace, Liberty of the Individual, Opposition to Colonial Domination and Racial Oppression and the Alleviation of Poverty.

1986-8



1989

### Royal Celebration

In 1989 The Commonwealth of Learning came into existence. The project aimed to link institutions across the Commonwealth to share information and enhance access. Following the excitement of the previous year, the Branch resumed many of its regular activities including an art and craft show, cricket match & coach tour.

## News from around The Commonwealth



### Winner of Nelson Mandela World Human Rights Moot Court Competition announced

The winner of the first 'Christof Heyns Memorial Commonwealth Prize' was announced during the virtual 13th Nelson Mandela World Human Rights Moot Court Competition.

The Competition, which ran from 2-16 July, was organised by the Centre for Human Rights based at the Faculty of Law of University of Pretoria, South Africa in partnership with the Washington College of Law of the American University, UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

This year's overall winners of the competition as well as the Christof Heyns Memorial Commonwealth Prize were the two-member team from Strathmore University, Kenya, Sumatra Hussain and Sanjana Ragu. The Prize money will be used towards organising a fully sponsored internship for them at the Centre for Human Rights of the University of Pretoria, South Africa.

### New partnership

Announced earlier in the month, Commonwealth Secretary-General Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC said: "We are proud to announce this award & mark the Secretariat's new partnership with the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria. We strongly believe that young peoples' increased understanding of contemporary human rights issues and challenges will contribute to effective public policymaking, strengthening national institutions & capacity development of civil society and human rights defenders. Moot court competitions like this can play an essential role in that regard".

Through this partnership, the Commonwealth Secretariat aims to increase the number of universities from the Commonwealth that participate in the competition. This year, 10 out of the 23 countries participating are from the Commonwealth, representing 19 universities & other institutions.

Established in 2009 & named after former President Nelson Mandela, the moot court is open to university students worldwide. During the competition, participants submit written legal arguments for the two opposing sides in a fictional dispute involving a contemporary human rights issue.

### Promoting human rights

The award is named after the late Professor Christof Heyns, a former Director of the Centre for Human Rights, in recognition of his service to the cause of human rights. During his career, he served as Professor of Human Rights Law at the University of Pretoria, a Special Rapporteur of the UN Human Rights Council, and a member of the UN Human Rights Committee.

In her opening address, Secretary-General Scotland emphasised that becoming a partner to this initiative highlights the Commonwealth's commitment to promoting human rights, the rule of law, democracy and good governance as set out in the Commonwealth Charter.

The Commonwealth Secretariat would like to extend its warm wishes & congratulations to the winners from Strathmore University, Kenya.

Source: <https://thecommonwealth.org/media/news/winner-nelson-mandela-world-human-rights-moot-court-competition-announced>

## Contact Details



The Royal Commonwealth Society Victoria Branch

"Gables on Finch"

15 Finch Street  
Malvern East  
Victoria  
03 9571 5688

PO Box 31 Caulfield East  
Victoria 3145

Victoria: [www.rcsvic.org](http://www.rcsvic.org)  
Global: [www.royalcwssociety.org](http://www.royalcwssociety.org)

[admin@rcsvic.org](mailto:admin@rcsvic.org)



### General 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.