



THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY SOUTH AUSTRALIA

PO Box 7013, 252-254 Halifax Street, Adelaide 5000
ABN 41 786 341 184

Email: thercssa@gmail.com

www.thercssa.com.au

President: Libby Ellis OAM

Ph 0412 820 121

Secretary: Julie Gameau OAM

Ph 0407 203 035

August 2026 – October 2026 Newsletter

Come and celebrate an early Christmas and the end of 2026 with
RCS members and friends

at a **High Tea**
at **Ayers House**
North Terrace, Adelaide
on **Saturday, 21st November, 2026**
from 1 pm – 4pm

RCS Member: \$50

Non-RCS Member \$65

RCS Student member \$30

Payment via direct debit to:
Royal Commonwealth Society SA Inc.
BSB: 105148
Account: 554020140

PATRONS

World Wide Patron: His Majesty King Charles III
World Wide Vice Patron: Her Majesty Queen Camilla
South Australian Patron: The Governor of South Australia
 Her Excellency, the Honourable Frances Adamson AC

DIARY DATES

Tuesday 25th August	Marine Discovery Centre visit
September 10th-13th	International Meeting in Edmonton Canada
Saturday 21 November	High Tea at Ayers House 1.00-4.00pm
Thursday 3rd December	Christmas reception

**The website for the Royal Commonwealth Society in
London is www.royalcwsociety.org**

**Find more information about The Royal Commonwealth Society
and the Commonwealth.**

www.royalcwsociety.org www.thecommonwealth.org
www.thercssa.com.au

Objects of the Royal Commonwealth Society

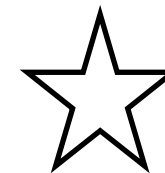
The objects of the society are to promote the increase and diffusion of knowledge respecting the people and Countries of the Commonwealth, to maintain the best traditions of the Commonwealth and to foster unity of thought and action to matters of common interest

STOP PRESS

St Marks College have announced that The RCS SA Scholarship Recipient is Cameron Dixon who will be embarking on a missionary project in Zambia. More details in the next newsletter.

MEMBERS PLEASE REMEMBER

Tuesday 25th August	Marine Discovery visit
Saturday 21 November	High Tea at Ayers House 1.00-4.00pm
Thursday 3rd December	Christmas reception

**MEMBERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH**

The following Countries are members of the Commonwealth

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, Singapore, Guyana, Botswana, Barbados, Lesotho, 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, St Christopher & Nevis, Brunei, Namibia, Cameroon, Mozambique, Rwanda, Maldives, The Gambia, Togo and Gabon

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 King Charles III as their own Head of State

Branch Council Members

President:	Libby Ellis OAM	0412 820 121
Vice President	Judy Clarke	0419 500 218
Treasurer	John Shepherd AM	0467 621 030
Secretary/acting Treasurer	Julie Gameau OAM	0407 203 035
Councillors:	Chris Ashton	0419 804 725
	Patsy Beckett	0407249850
	William Comley	0478 287 287
	Deb Johnson	0407 244 869
	Barbara Mayfield	0422 577 844
	Brenda Wallis	0481 481 116

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

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

REDISCOVERING ADELAIDE

Arrangements are being made for the next Rediscovering Adelaide events for September, October and November

Further details with dates, time and cost will be sent by email.

Please contact Julie if you are interested in these proposed visits.

THE EISTEDDFOD

The Adelaide Eisteddfod is entirely run by volunteer staff and organises on an annual basis Divisions for different instrument groups, including Choral and Vocal which both receive sponsorship from the Royal Commonwealth Society South Australia.

The **Choral Division** this year had 21 choirs (mostly from schools) which competed in seven sections. The event was held at Elder Hall on Wednesday 10 June, from 3.30pm to 9pm. The competitions give the choirs an opportunity to sing before an appreciative audience in a beautiful venue, and receive constructive feedback from an experienced adjudicator.

RCSSA sponsored 1st prize of \$200 in the Open Age Community Choirs (non-school) section. The winning choir was Wilderness Old Scholars Jazz Choir.

The **Vocal Division** section V705 20 years and under Operatic Voice Solo is sponsored by The Royal Commonwealth Society South Australia The 2026 Vocal Division was held from 26 June to 4 July at The Warehouse Theatre and Hartley Concert Room at Adelaide University. The Adjudicators were Nicholas Lester, Mark Oates and Kim Spargo.

The First prize was awarded to Henry Sawers.

VALE

The RCS Council and membership extends condolences to Barbara Mayfield, her family and the Canny family on the death of Nic Canny. Nic was a great supporter of RCS SA. He attended many functions and enjoyed the luncheon and dinner meetings.

He was 99 years old and we were all looking forward to his 100th birthday in 2027

We will all miss Nic

President's Report AROUND THE TRAPS

Rediscovering Adelaide

These informal visits to Adelaide icons have continued way beyond the amount of time we thought they would when they were started to encourage our members back out into the community again after the COVID lockdowns. Among the recent memorable visits were Adelaide Arcade and Ukria, Early in the year we visited *Asia by the Sea at Glenelg*, when some of us met and travelled down by tram going over the new overpasses for the first time.

Commonwealth Talks

The most recent one of these was arranged by Patsy. Isabel Redman, who's talk was entitled "A funny thing happened on the way to the forum", spoke about her visit to Canada to attend the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meeting there. The CPA comprises every politician in every country, state and territory in the Commonwealth; based in London it does a lot of work under the radar to develop and strengthen democracy in Commonwealth countries. I very worthwhile and enjoyable evening.

LOOKING FORWARD

Commonwealth Games

RCS Presidents from across Australia were invited to Admiralty House, the Governor-General's home in Sydney, to participate in a ceremony around the King's baton, on its way to Glasgow. I was lucky enough to be able to attend and take this opportunity to wish Australia's athletes all the very best in the Games commencing on 23rd July.

CHOGM

This year the meetings are being held in Antigua & Barbuda. Unlike in Samoa, when RCS SA hosted an informal get-together one evening, this year the President of the Antigua/Barbuda Branch, Lady Williams, wife of the Governor General, is hosting a more formal reception for RCS members attending some of the events associated with CHOGM.

RCS International meeting

The 2026 RCS IM is being hosted by the Edmonton Branch in Alberta Canada. There will be a small group attending from Adelaide as well as Melbourne. I am not sure who else is attending from around the Commonwealth, but it will be very exciting to be in Canada just at the moment when the western axis seems to be tilting.

ONGOING PARTNERSHIPS

During 2025 we established several of these, and we have maintained and strengthened these links in 2026.

Commonwealth Week service.

We attended this service last year at Christ Church, North Adelaide, but this year were able to stage a parade of all 57 Commonwealth flags. It was a great sight, and we are looking forward to even more ceremony next year.

COMMONWEALTH TALKS

Isobel Redmond was the star guest at the May 21st event for the Royal Commonwealth Society, held at St Mark's College. Lawyer, raconteur, politician and taser survivor, it had the promise of a lively and entertaining evening.

The title of Isobel Redmond's talk was, in a nod to the book and film of the same name:

'A Funny thing happened on the way to the Forum.'

As a Commonwealth politician, Isobel was eminently qualified to take part in a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) forum in Ottawa, Canada.

As a Commonwealth politician, Isobel was eminently qualified to take part in a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) forum in Ottawa, Canada. After flying from Hong Kong to Vancouver, she had several hours to kill before the bus journey via Toronto to Ottawa. As a sign of her good nature, she volunteered to be one of the ones standing aside as other connections were more pressing when seats had been overbooked. In a convoluted scenario, this resulted in her being stranded in a remote parking lot at 1.30 am in the morning after the bus driver's shift had finished. All ended well, however, and she eventually arrived in time for the forum in Ottawa! The CPA, which as a major Commonwealth pillar, is of particular pertinence to RCS. The CPA began as the Empire Parliamentary Association in 1911 and evolved from a very small gathering of the primarily 'white' dominions, undergoing further adaptation with the Balfour Declaration of 1926 and with the name change to CPA in 1948. It now embraces 180 parliaments across 56 Commonwealth nations. Many of these are state and territorial parliaments such as our own from South Australia and numerous regional parliaments in India and Canada, among others.

The main aim of the CPA is the promotion of democracy, obviously with varying degrees of success depending on the circumstances across the Commonwealth.

Focal points for discussion have included:

Women's issues

Disabilities

Smaller Commonwealth nations – under 1 million

Standards for Parliaments

Disinformation

Mental Health

A most entertaining and informative evening!

Dennis Coleman

This is a short summary of the report presented by Dennis
Please read the full and interesting report on the RCSSA website

News from London

ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2030

Our Strategic Plan 2025–2030 sets out how we will deepen our work across three interconnected pillars: equality, education and the environment, in pursuit of our vision to improve the lives and prospects of all Commonwealth citizens.

Over the next five years, we will:

- Continue to act as a trusted convener, bringing together governments, businesses, civil society and young people to share knowledge and inspire action across the Commonwealth.
- Develop and support young leaders from all 56 Commonwealth countries help deliver our work and shape a better future for the communities they represent.
- Advance progress towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals through our programmes in education, equality and environmental sustainability.

Our three strategic pillars are:

- Equality: championing inclusion, opportunity and female leadership across the Commonwealth
- Education: equipping young people with the skills, voice and confidence to lead
- Environment: supporting collective action to protect and restore our shared planet

For further information Look up the website RCS website

New Member

The South Australian RCS welcomes Carmen Bishop as a new member
We wish you a long and happy association with the Society and look forward to seeing you at future functions

MEMBERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH

(a bit of light reading)

DID YOU KNOW?

The Commonwealth spans the globe and includes both advanced economies and developing countries that work together to pursue common goals which promote development, democracy and peace.

There are fifty six (56) independent countries in the Commonwealth, and 33 small states with 2.7 billion people (representing one quarter of the world's population over every continent) calling the Commonwealth 'home'.

Africa (21 countries)

Asia (8)

Caribbean and Americas (13)

Europe (3)

Pacific (11)

The 33 small states usually with a population under 1.5 million and 25 members are small island developing states. The Pacific nation of Nauru is the smallest Commonwealth member country with a population of just over 12,000.

More than 60% of population is aged 29 or under.

1 in 3 young people aged between 15 and 29 live in Commonwealth countries (about 640 million out of 1.8 billion).

The combined GDP of Commonwealth countries in 2021 was US\$13.1 trillion and is estimated to reach \$19.5 trillion in 2027, almost doubling in ten years from \$10.4 trillion in 2017.

(Patsy Beckett, RCS Council)

Source: <https://thecommonwealth.org/about/facts>

ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY CHRISTMAS PARTY

Mark the date in your diary Thursday 3rd December 2026
Come and celebrate Christmas with your RCS friends

Further details will be announced in the November newsletter.

Photos in this newsletter were taken by Julie Gameau and provided by Libby Ellis and

President's Report continued

Glenthorne National Park.

The nine Korten steel panels have now been cut and delivered, and negotiations are almost complete about where and how they will be installed around the Commonwealth grove and the munitions huts. The trees that are the core of the Grove, planted some time ago and every one seems to be thriving. Our thanks to Judy Clarke and the Friends of Glenthorne, for their ongoing support of this project.

Co-Opera Incorporated.

This wonderful little company has reemerged swinging. Early in the year we saw a wonderful season of *Faust*, for which we were the major sponsor, and a smaller season of two one act modern American operas. They have kick started a fund-raising campaign for 2028 and beyond when our agreed funding is completed. This has taken the form of having the piano painted and piano keys being "sold" at a series of community concerts.

RCS SA Scholarship.

In 2025 we created a perpetual scholarship and asked the Board of St Marks to manage it on our behalf. The first of these scholarships has been awarded very recently, and we look forward to meeting the first recipient and unveiling our Honour Board very shortly.



Libby Ellis OAM

Save the date:

To fill the long dull time between lunch and dinner, in 1840 the 7th Duchess of Bedford ordered a tray of tea, bread, butter and cakes which was the first afternoon tea, and over time, has become a popular social gathering.

High Tea
at Ayers House

North Terrace, Adelaide

on Saturday, 21st November, 2026

from 1pm - 4pm

A flyer will be sent closer to the event

ADELAIDE ARCADE

RCS Members and friends gathered at the well-known Adelaide Mall fountain for the May “Rediscovering Adelaide” event. Happily, the rain held off for our tour of the iconic landmark, Adelaide Arcade.

Our charming and well-Informed guide, Mel, explained the 1885 construction of the façade and its famous domes as well as the interior which retains elements of the original Italian architecture.

The Arcade has the feel of a bygone era and we learned that the Victorian air-conditioning was operated by pulleys to open and close the vents. The first-floor gallery originally housed a ballroom, billiard-room and was home to the Australian Dance Theatre. These details underlined the role that the Arcade played in the social life of Adelaide’s residents at that time.

We also toured the first-floor museum with an original early-edition newspaper. Our guide revealed that the Arcade has a resident ghost; however, RCS members did not appear worried by this information! Our tour finished at the site of the former underground tea-rooms where RCS President, Libby Ellis conveyed thanks to our guide for the excellent and informative tour of part of the history of Adelaide.

Brenda Wallis



CONGRATULATIONS

The RCS extends heartfelt congratulations to RCS member, Brian Chatterton OAM on his recent award of an AM (Member of the Order of Australia) in the King’s Birthday Honours.

Brian’s contribution to musical life in South Australia is amazing.

Brian has been a teacher, administrator, Director of the Elder Conservatorium and Dean of Performing Arts at the University of Adelaide, board member, musical director of many community musical societies, member of music review panels, adjudicator at music eisteddfods and many more.....

Brian has studied or taught in Essex, Basle, Prague, Milan, Edmonton and London.

The RCS knows Brian as the Musical director and General Manager of Co-Opera.

Brian has been Musical Director of over 1,000 Co-Opera performances covering every State and Territory in Australia. Additionally, from 2005 – 2012, Brian conducted over 30 performances in SE Asia, Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

A well deserved award Brian Chatterton AM

CO-OPERA

Charles Gounod’s Faust. May 2026

Robbie Macfarlane – Dr Faust – needy, greedy, angry and romantic

Eugene Raggio – Mephistopheles – carelessly, deeply evil – cynical

Livia Brash/Amelia Price – Margeurite – young, vulnerable, awakening sensuality, ruined by Dr Faust.

What a wonderful, soaring emotional, gorgeous evening of music and drama.

Nick Cannon’s production was fast, dramatic, and sensual, and it offered the singers constant opportunities to shine.

Lighting and simple sets worked with the cast and music, to highlight the high drama of Gounod’s opera.

The community Chorus added depth and delicacy to the music, and the beautiful strong and assertive piano of Sachiko

Hidaka held the performance together.

Co Opera – a triumph – thank you – a joy.

Judy Clarke

Community Concert

This was a most enjoyable performance with a happy audience being so close to the action!

So easy to appreciate fine voices and personalities of Grace Bawden, Lyn Harris, David Vincentin and Andrew Turner performing arias from La Boheme, Tosca and La Traviata. Andrew Turner drew the audience into the storylines with a nice touch of humour.

An added bonus was hearing Jackie Hatcher, an amazing clarinettist.

The venue gets a plus for acoustics, quiet surrounds, and room to park.

A most welcoming concert on a Sunday afternoon

Barbara Mayfield

An American Double Bill

Co-Opera recently concluded its season of An American Double Bill, in the glorious ballroom of Ayers House.

A Hand of Bridge, the first offering, was a light-hearted, jazz inspired opera, done and dusted in less than 10 minutes! Bridge players in particular chuckled at the many references to the game, but the opera was enjoyed by all.

The Medium, the second of the operas, invited the audience into Madam Flora’s parlour to witness her fake seances. Far from the fun nature of the first, this led us on a journey into madness, grief and despair. A powerful piece which was overwhelmingly well received by the audiences on each of the four performances.

It was lovely to see many RCS faces in the audience, given the long association between the RCS and Co-Opera.

Deb Johnson