Australia-Britain Society (NSW Branch) Inc

(Incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act, 1984(NSW)

Registered No CFN 15054 under section 16 of the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991(NSW)

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NEWSLETTER JANUARY, 2009

1. COMING EVENTS

a) Australia Day Luncheon 26th January, noon until 3.30pm at the Kirribilli Club, 11 Harbourview Crescent, Lavender Bay 2060 in the Harbourview Lounge. Cost: $85.00 members and guests. Three-course luncheon including drinks. Please reply ASAP as limited to eight tables of ten people. Dress smart casual. Parking. Guest speaker Lt. Commander Desmond Woods RAN of HMAS Creswell who will give a slide presentation and review of our early settlement history under Governor Hunter.

The delay in advising this event is regretted and is due to our usual venue, the American Club, ceasing to trade at short notice and the difficulty in getting alternative venues at a cost that our members will support. Many clubs and hotels are either not providing selective services or want heavy room hire rates. Holiday surcharges appear the norm and we were fortunate in the past with none of these costs at the American Club. However, we have priced this event at slightly lower than cost and will rely on raffle sales to return a positive outcome. Seafood such as oysters and prawns have increased in price and we would have to charge $95.00 a head to provide this coverage, which the Committee believes members would not want to pay. The menu is very good and includes salt/pepper squid or chicken Caesar salad, New York steak/Atlantic salmon, pavlova, plus drinks.

The club has parking underneath at a reasonable price and is less than a ten-minute walk from Milson's Point station, buses nearby and ferries. Overall the location is good and our room has some harbour views. Please reply by 19th January as we have to make a financial commitment to the club.

b) Casual luncheon February, 18-Footers Sailing Club, Double Bay on harbour. Limited to 5 tables of ten and subject to numbers would be around $55 a head. A date has to be firmed with the club however aiming to be mid-week say Tuesday or Wednesday.

c) **Queen's Birthday Luncheon NSW Parliament house. This is scheduled for June and Her Excellency the Governor-General has been invited as Guest of Honour.**

2. RECENT EVENTS

a) Remembrance Day Service and Luncheon at the Queen's Club were wonderful double events, thanks to Mrs Patricia Bridges who hosted the luncheon at this magnificent venue. Rear Admiral Ross Swan gave an illuminating and reflective address on his military service and around forty people enjoyed the day.

With low margins we cannot run functions of value with guest speakers where only forty members attend. From next year, we will hold the service and earmark spaces at a city hotel that provides a buffet to members at under $40.00 and with a small booking fee.

b) Christmas Party at the home of British Consul-General Richard Morris and Mrs Alison Morris was well attended and is a flag-ship event in our calendar in a wonderful location with a value package of food and drinks. We are grateful to Mr and Mrs Morris for their continuing hospitality.

c) Nine carols and lessons at St. James' King Street, followed by mince pies and champagne in the crypt, was well supported and the church was packed with stirring carols and readings plus a choir recital supported by one of the city's best organs. This event is as close to an English event as one can find in the city on a Sunday evening in Advent.

d) New Year's Eve at the American Club – the last night of club trading - was enjoyed by a group of members.

3. NEW YEAR'S EVE 2009

Bookings for suitable venues have to be made early. We have managed to get up to five tables of ten at the Kirribilli Club in a private area with a balcony to view the bridge and fireworks at all up cost of around $180.00 a head until early am for three-course dinner and endless drinks. We need to make a financial commitment to secure this spot and would like some indication of member interest. It is easy walking from the train and has parking underneath plus access to excellent firework viewing. Please send an email or phone the secretariat to indicate if you have an interest in our reserving this event that will need to be paid for around time of booking late June or July.

3. EVENT RESPONSES

It is disappointing to have to seek member support for the Society in not only attending functions, but when doing to send in bookings *before* the close-off date. We have always tried our best to accommodate requests from members after cut-off dates based on good faith that those payments will arrive, which is not always the case. Also, it is unreasonable to telephone at the last minute to book, which may require us to re-arrange seating. In some instances, members even attend without booking and have to be chased to pay. It must be understood that we have to give financial commitments to the function venue several days in advance, and if those late-bookers do not turn up and do not pay, the Society has to bear the loss. There is also extra work involved where the

secretariat sometimes has to visit members to collect payment. It has been a long-suffering problem that is now out of hand. Thanks for understanding that we must abide by cut-off dates. Importantly, we may have to reduce our grants programmes if events are not supported, or simply see reserves dissipate and the Society wind down. The Society is run by a pro-bono group and we price events almost at cost to give members value. Sorry for bad news on a New Year newsletter as most members are wonderful supportive people whom we appreciate.

4. PLAIN ENGLISH SPEAKING AWARDS

You may remember that **Daniel Swain** was the Australian winner in 2007 and last year obtained 100% in his HSC examinations. Congratulations Daniel on such an outstanding achievement.

5. NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome the following new members and look forward to seeing you at coming events:

Juanita Plowes

6. PASSINGS

We regret the loss of the following members and extend sympathy to their family and friends:

Geoffrey Holt

7. TALL SHIPS' SAIL TRAINING WINNERS FOR 2008

We are pleased to confirm that the winners for 2009 are **Arjun Bisen,** 21, a board secretary from Wattle Grove, and **Edward Farrell,** 22, a network engineer from Neutral Bay, are the Society awardees for this year from an extensive short list of exceptional candidates. We thank the selection committee of the Young Endeavour Youth Scheme, Mr. Murray Henstock, and our members Commander Richard Tighe, Mrs. Meredith Rundle, and Mr. David Adams for giving their time to this project. Tom Carr, one of the 2007 awardees, attended the selection process to brief the candidates.

Have a happy 2009 and our continuing good wishes,

Richard Nott
President.