



# 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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*Patron: His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley, AC DSC (Ret'd)  
Governor of New South Wales*

**Branch President: Richard Nott, AM**

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**Administration Secretary: Sue Labordus**

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**NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY, 2016**

**2016.1**

## **1. COMING EVENTS**

### **a) OPERA GALA CONCERT SUNDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2.00PM-4.00PM CHATSWOOD CONCOURSE**

This event is almost sold out at the box office and we have reserved the last two rows of the stalls (good viewing and listening location) and have around 16 seats remaining on a first come basis at \$47.00 a seat and no booking fee. If you would like seats please telephone Sue Labordus on 94497532 and send payment via a cheque and a return stamped envelope (we make a very small margin so postage coverage will help).

The attached flyer sets out the programme and it includes not only a wonderful orchestra and chorus but also a variety of talented soloists performing popular and well-known opera arias, melodies and choruses. This event is on Valentine's Day and may entice you to consider such an enjoyable afternoon.

The Chatswood Concourse is only a five-minute walk from the station and there is parking underneath the building. As the programme is virtually sold out already, early arrival to get parking spots is suggested. There are a wide group of restaurants as a part of the complex if you are considering a pre-luncheon arrival but bookings are suggested. This is an excellent value event.

### **b) "YOUNG ENDEAVOUR" WELCOME FROM WORLD JOURNEY**

You may remember we have held luncheons aboard the Young Endeavour limited to around 35 guests when it is moored at Garden Island Naval complex. Young Endeavour returns from its world cruise in March and will undergo a re-fit. Vice President Richard Tighe is investigating whether we will have an access to the vessel before the Navy re-assesses its future economic life. The Young Endeavour was Britain's Bi-Centennial gift to Australia, and we encourage you to consider joining this late morning gathering if it can be arranged as it may be one of our final opportunities. Details will be provided as soon as the Young Endeavour programme is finalised.

**c) COMMONWEALTH DAY LUNCHEON MONDAY 14 MARCH AT NSW PARLIAMENT HOUSE STRANGERS' DINING ROOM NOON FOR 12.30, COST \$95.00. GUEST SPEAKER: MARGARET CUNNEEN, SC, DEPUTY SENIOR CROWN PROSECUTOR IN NSW.**

Please refer to the attached flyer for more details. You may note that responses are to be sent to the Commonwealth Day Council direct (not to the Australia-Britain Society), and we suggest you indicate on the form that you wish to sit with the ABS group.

This event is a combined one where the various British related organisations support the Commonwealth Day Council that organises this annual and important celebratory event at no extra charge to our members.

**d) QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY DINNER, MAY 2016**

Our aim is to make this a worthy celebration of her Majesty's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday and a blanket of dates in mid to late May have been reserved at the Australian Club Members' Dining Room which holds up to 150 places. His Excellency the Governor-General has been invited as Patron of the Society Foundation and once this is firmed up, we are hopeful that our NSW Branch Patron, His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley, Governor of New South Wales, and his predecessors Dame Marie Bashir and Rear Admiral the Honourable Peter Sinclair may be able to join in such a special evening. Entertainment will be by Living Treasures from the Australian Opera who sang with Dame Joan Sutherland and who will render a group of Gilbert and Sullivan rollicking songs.

Please aim to respond early to the firm invitation that will issue in late April and will be limited to members and partners plus two guests as a number of collegiate groups will be invited as well. This is a black tie event with free parking from 6.00pm under the club building. Details to follow in the next newsletter.

**e) LAST NIGHT OF THE PROMS 21 AUGUST CHATSWOOD 2.00-4.00PM**

We have 100 seats reserved and the best available after subscribers for this event, confident that we will sell them at \$47.00, after the wonderful event last year and your positive feedback. The tickets will be available to us later in the year and there are no booking fees, only a stamped envelope for the ticket (half the cost of comparable Opera House events). Please note in your diaries.

## **2. RECENT EVENTS**

### **a) Christmas Luncheon**

Around sixty members and friends attended this casual luncheon at the Athenian restaurant in Barrack Street, Sydney. Feedback confirmed that it was excellent value but a little noisy. It was suggested that an early 6.00pm dinner be considered as an alternative for this year at the same venue where general public attendance and noise levels will be low. The Committee will be reviewing this based on your comments and will keep you advised. The majority view was that it was a good event and worth holding again. As well, we made a good margin on the occasion as the committee provided most of the desserts, lucky door and raffle prizes plus the Turkish delight. Your attendance gave our coffers a needed boost! Our thanks.

### **b) Nine Carols and Lessons St. James' Church King Street**

This traditional annual event to a packed congregation is one of the city's great choral and ecclesiastical events with several pews reserved for the Society. Afterwards the crypt was the venue for a Christmastide celebratory drink and mince pies with the choir, clergy and lesson readers including His Excellency the Governor, Dame Marie Bashir and Mr. Nick McInnes, the British Consul-General. This service, with indeed its pre-eminent organ, choir and clergy is one of the great services modelled on the King's College Cambridge ritual. Only the cold weather was missing!

### **c) Australia Day Harbour Cruise**

Close to forty members and friends joined this special Captain Cook cruise reserved for the Order of Australia Association and this Society. Overall it was an excellent day from 10.30 until 2.30 with a constant coverage of the harbour to see the main water events and the fly-pasts. With reserved numbers there was ample room, good seating access to viewing floors, good food, drinks and a quality vessel. Hopefully we can join in this event again in 2017 that is offered to members at no additional cost to that provided to the Order of Australia Association and gives our members access to an event we could not manage ourselves due to the need to have at least 100 guaranteed attendees.

### **d) Australia Day celebratory luncheon 28 January at Union, University and Schools Club.**

This event was our first at this prestigious club in the city, and 104 people from this Society and Australians For Constitutional Monarchy joined in a relaxed luncheon to celebrate Australia Day. It was joined by their Excellencies General The Honourable David Hurley, Governor of New South Wales, and Mrs. Menna Rawlings British High Commissioner supported by Mr. Nick McInnes, British Consul-General. This was a great opportunity to celebrate Australia as a nation and reflect on our wonderful British heritage, encapsulated by our guests of honour and the vote of thanks by Professor David Flint. The occasion enabled members of both groups to meet the new British High Commissioner, and the general feedback was positive as to location and the overall event quality. Thanks to the committee for donating the lucky seat and raffle prizes, to Kelley Priest and Edward Farrell, both Tall ships awardees, for selling the tickets with Tom Jackson and

Andrea Havers. Ken Bock acted as our excellent MC, and Sue Labordus organised the whole event for which we are appreciative. Thank you all for attending.

### 3. NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome **Eric Mitchell**, **Kim Lennard** and **Neesha Sousa** as new members and look forward to seeing them at coming events. Please make yourselves known to them when you can.

### 4. POSTAGE COSTS AND DELIVERY

This is a National groan but a fact of life that electronic substitutes are dropping physical mail traffic, resulting in massive postage increases and slower deliveries. The good old postal days are gone. Please let us know if you receive a physical newsletter and have a substitute email contact to reduce costs. Also if you pay for events electronically please add your name to the deposit so that we can identify payments on the statements. More importantly, we will need to place shorter function acceptance closure dates to allow for slower mail receipts. Late bookings cause us to make special trips to the Gordon letterbox almost daily. It also involves re-writing the seating plans and final commitments that cannot be covered by a phone acceptance and non attendance when we have to guarantee and cover payments. Thank you for considering this issue and try and reply early to events. Also, if you have lost the event details ring the Secretariat or the President as soon as you can and we will aim to help re-instate the data.

### 5. GENERAL

Our aim is to provide a variety of events, some of which may not suit some members. Please give us feedback on what you enjoyed or did not so that we can modify future offerings. We keep in mind the need to offer value and we price these events close to cost, recognising members are on fixed incomes. However, in doing this we cannot rely on static membership fees as many members are life members who pay no annual fees and we need attendances of over 50 people to make raffle supplements cost effective. Please attend events and we can continue to offer them as value added items. Alternatively, if you support the organisation and its Tall Ships and Plain English Speaking awards programmes, you may wish to consider sending us a donation if attendance at events is difficult.

The Committee always needs more help to ease the pressure on few willing hands. This is needed to gather raffle prizes such as restaurant meals, theatre or cinema tickets. Additionally if we have a focussed committee we can consider raising funds to support some travel prizes or widen the scope of event tickets at concessional prices. If you have some time and would like to join a small but happy group who meet every few months at the Royal Exchange Club in the city, let any of the Committee know. Succession planning is important to continue our vitality and bring fresh ideas.

With continuing best wishes,

*Richard Nott*