



Australia-Britain Society (NSW Branch) Inc

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NEWSLETTER - JUNE 2020

2020.04

1. GREETINGS FROM OUR PATRON

Her Excellency, the Hon. Margaret Beazley, AC QC, our Patron, and Colonel Michael Miller, her Private Secretary, had a conference call with Sue Labordus and myself recently to express their continuing interest in the Society and our current work towards preserving the vitality of the Society and her interest in attending events when the restrictions are lifted. We mentioned particularly the Christmas luncheon and as well our aim to hold a gala event next May, not only to mark Her Majesty's birthday and St. George's Day, but to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Society with added special guests and entertainment. This will be a grand affair.

2. PROGRAMME STATUS

To date, there are no indications that we can quickly reinstate our planned programme, due to the limited numbers allowed to gather and the potential for larger group gatherings to be at the ebb tide of the cycle of restrictions. Most musical functions for August have been cancelled by all organisations and we are at this stage uncertain as to whether the Last Night of the Proms on 22/23 August at the Concourse in Chatswood, planned to be a special occasion this year at it is to be filmed, will indeed take place. Willoughby Council have advised that they are awaiting instructions from the government regarding the holding of concerts, which instructions they expect to receive on 1 July. We have already received bookings for this concert, and should it go ahead, those who have booked will, of course, have preferential seating. If you would like to attend, please indicate your interest if you have not already done so, by phoning Sue Labordus on 9449-7532 or emailing her at absociety@idx.com.au and she will earmark seats for you. No monies are asked for at this stage as we are unable to issue tickets. If you have paid to attend this event and the concert is eventually cancelled, then we shall refund you in full.

Payments received for the Sir Peter Cosgrove luncheon cancellation have been processed as requested by members who have booked and paid, by either refunding the amount by cheque or bank deposit, or by retention as a booking in advance, or a donation. We are most grateful to those members who have taken the latter course. Hopefully we will be able to hold a good Christmas luncheon towards the end of the year and an earlier smaller luncheon with the Hon Michael Pembroke on Remembrance Day.

The AGM is scheduled for September and we have a timing option of at least six months after the financial year end on 30 June to hold a meeting or a truncated one electronically. This will be reviewed closer to the date line.

3. MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

It is now June, which normally means that subscriptions for the coming year 2020-2021 would soon be due, on 1 July. However, in view of the exceptional circumstances that we are all facing at the moment, meaning that we have had to put our entire programme on hold, your committee has decided to waive subscriptions for the coming year. This means that in order to remain a member of the Society, you do not need to pay us anything. However, having said this, if you wish to send us a voluntary subscription this would be more than welcome, as it would help the Society with postage, printing and other costs and boost our scholarship fund for young Australians. (In case you need to know, our normal subscription rates for 2020-2021 would have been: General: \$40pa, Senior [over 65]: \$35, Family [2 people]: \$65.)

4. BRITISH PENSIONS

A number of our members have spent some time working in the UK, but possibly are not aware of the fact that they may be entitled to receive a pension from the UK. We have received detailed updates on the position regarding payment of British pensions to members and friends in Australia and the progress being made in gaining easier access to pensions and some CPI potential adjustments to pensions in Australia which are at the present time frozen. This data, provided by Jim Tilley, Hon Vice-Chairman of The British Pensioners in Australia Association, is extensive. If you have an interest in this data, please contact Sue Laborus on 94497532 or absociety@idx.com.au and Sue will send out the data to your email address.

5. QUEEN ELIZABETH SCONE RECIPE

Her Majesty has agreed that her pastry chefs can distribute details of her scone recipe. I have attached a summation of this recipe to save members needing to access the website. Also, I have added some local measurements. If you need more details you can access the website added to the bottom of the recipe.

Controversy has existed for many years, especially between Devon and Cornwall, as to whether the enjoyment of these scones should follow using the jam first process then cream or the reverse. With our local cream not having the body of clotted cream, the tendency is for a jam first process and the Royal chefs indicate this is the Queen's preference.

There are many short cuts to good scones, especially the simple lemonade and sour cream recipe, but I may well try this one that is an old and true one enjoyed by guests of the Royal Household.

6. COLONEL SIR TOM MOORE

One of the great delights in recent days was to see the contribution of the then Captain Tom Moore in raising funds for the remediation and alleviation of the coronavirus by walking around his home that raised around £33 million. In acknowledgement of this effort by a 100-year old, the Queen has awarded him a knighthood and the honorary rank of Colonel. Well done Tom and for your inspiration to all the British people and this was typified by the flypast over Tom's home of a Spitfire and Hurricane.

Thank you for your current interest and support for the Society. We have had no reports of members succumbing to the virus and having weathered the war blitz even as children we are probably a hardy lot. My only impediment has been a bulging waist-line due to testing of a busy cake and slice-making activity!

Best wishes,

Richard Nott