

THE BRITAIN-AUSTRALIA SOCIETY

WEST COUNTRY BRANCH

BRISTOL - CORNWALL - DEVON - DORSET - GLOUCESTERSHIRE - SOMERSET – WILTSHIRE

To West Country Branch Members of the Britain-Australia Society

BRANCH NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2015

Note from the Chairman - Keith Newton



Helles Memorial, Gallipoli

Dear Branch Members and Friends,

I write this newsletter having just returned from our summer vacation, which concluded with a two-day visit to Gallipoli and the ANZAC landing sites. This is an incredibly moving and yet, beautiful place with well-maintained Commonwealth War Grave Cemeteries; viewing spots and signage; and museums. I certainly had not realized how small the size of the actual land held by the ANZACS and Allied forces, the closeness of the opposing trenches (only six meters in some places), and the tiny pieces of land being fought over at places such as The Nek, Lone Pine, and Chunuk Bair - names which are indelibly stamped upon my brain from childhood dawn services, Anzac Day marches and other commemorative events.

Luckily, my vacation allowed me to be spared the pain of the Ashes cricket, although there is always hope for the Wallabies with the Rugby World Cup next month in Britain. The Wallabies will, of course, be based here in the West Country at Bath.

This newsletter contains a brief summary of the annual Sutton Veny cricket match supported by the Branch, a very interesting article on Robert Bush, and the Woodland Trust, again highlighting the close historical links between Australia and the West Country, and a summary of our upcoming branch events. I encourage you to visit our branch website

<http://www.britozwest.org.uk> to read more.

I look forward to seeing you at the October 12 Admiral Arthur Phillip Birthday Service and commemorations at Bathampton where Mrs. Nicola Downer AM, will speak to us about the role of the Arts in building and supporting ongoing Britain Australia relationships.

Keith Newton

Chairman, West Country Branch, Britain-Australia Society.

**Australia House Cricket Club
vs Sutton Veny & Heytesbury Cricket Club
Sunday, 14 June 2015**



The winning side: Sutton Veny Cricket Club

Members and guests enjoyed a great day of fun, food, sunshine and of course, cricket for the Australia House Cricket Club versus Sutton Veny match which was held on the Sutton Veny Village Green on 14 June. The limited over match was a close run affair ultimately won by Sutton Veny Cricket Club.

Prizes were presented by Brigadier William Sowry AM CSC and Kay Pavitt raised £270 in aid of the Cricket Pavilion through raffle ticket sales.

This year we had a disappointingly low turnout of our membership so we will be announcing and advertising the event earlier next year to ensure a good presence at what is a fantastic family day out.



Post-match prize giving at Sutton Veny Village Green

You can't get more Britain-Australia than this:

We were contacted by Emeritus Professor Chris Stephens, a member of the Woodland Trust, who wanted to bring to our attention the story of Robert Edwin Bush (1855-1939).

Robert Edwin Bush and his three brother attended Clifton College Bristol, all played rugby (see <http://www.cliftonrfchistory.co.uk/members/members B.htm>). Robert also played cricket and captained the school XI where he would have been observed by the young Douglas (later Field Marshall) Haig. Robert and his brother James Arthur Bush also played cricket for Gloucestershire alongside the great Dr WG Grace.

In 1878, at the age of 23, Robert emigrated to Western Australia where he ended up a successful sheep farmer holding over a million acres. He became a JP and was a member of the first Western Australia first Legislative Council. Still keen on cricket he played in the first ever inter-colonial cricket match, between Western Australia and Victoria in April 1893 and was instrumental with others in purchasing land for the WACA - the Western Australian Cricket Ground still in use today.

In 1904 Bush left Australia and returned to England a multimillionaire. At the outbreak of hostilities in August 1914 Bush wanted to play his part supporting the soldiers of his adopted country. He and his Australian wife immediately set about converting their large house at Bishops Knoll Bristol into a fully equipped 100 bed hospital which they undertook and then ran entirely at their own expense. It was ready to accept its first patients in October 1914. In addition to the 4 wards there was an operating theatre and a staff of 4 doctors, with a matron, 7 trained nurses and 25 Red Cross auxiliaries which included Bush's daughter Charlotte. Her mother Marjorie Bush was the hospital quartermaster and Bush himself worked as an orderly, making regular trips to Bristol's Temple Meads station to collect the Australian wounded. From the outset Bush wished to treat only Australians but was prevented from doing so until 1916 when an Order in Council allowed him to accept Australians directly from the front.

By the end of the war over 2000 Australian service men had been treated and recovered there. Fourteen Australians who didn't make it are buried in the Bristol Arnos Vale Cemetery as are Bush and his wife.

After Robert Bush's death Bishops Knoll was bought by Sir George White and used as an apprentice school for the Bristol Aeroplane Company. Then in 1948 it became a hostel and school for nurses of the Bristol Royal Infirmary finally being demolished in 1973. However the gardens, and the small arboretum which the Australians would have known, is now under the guardianship of the Woodland Trust.

For more information, see:

<http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/wood/4089/bishops-knoll/>



Plaque which was placed at Bishops Knoll by the UK's Australian War Contingent Association in 1919 now housed at the Australian War Memorial at Canberra where it was sent when the house was demolished in 1973.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

Admiral Arthur Phillip Birthday Celebrations 12 October 2015



Francis Wheatley's portrait of Admiral Phillip currently on show at the Victoria Art Gallery, Bath

BOOK NOW!

A reminder that the celebration of Admiral Phillip's birthday will take place on Monday, 12 October. The church service at St Nicholas, Bathampton starts at 11am preceded by coffee from 10.30am. We will then host this year's luncheon at the newly renovated Bailbrook House in Batheaston. After many years at the Guildhall, Bailbrook House has a convenient location for St Nicholas Church and ample parking. There is also an opportunity for accommodation for those travelling from further afield. Please see the booking form for further details and rates.

Mrs Nicola Downer AM has very kindly agreed to be our keynote speaker. She will be attending the celebrations with her husband, The Rt Hon Alexander Downer AM, the Australian High Commissioner to London. Further guests and dignitaries will be announced in due course.

The cost for members is £39 and non-members £45. This includes the civic reception, formal lunch with wine followed by coffee. Please [click here](#) for the booking form.

Please note that there Bailbrook House is offering single occupancy and double occupancy accommodation for £99 and £109 per night respectively (subject to availability) on Sunday – Thursday for the dates of the Arthur Phillip celebration. Please quote 'Brit-Oz lunch' when booking.

www.bailbrookhouse.co.uk or 01225 855100

Places for the celebration are limited so please complete the booking form at the earliest opportunity.

**ABC Documentary on Admiral Arthur Phillip
Bath Town and County Club
November 2015**

At the end of June, ABC in Australia broadcast a documentary on Admiral Phillip which included the participation of Sir Roger Carrick. We are delighted to announce that we will be hosting a viewing of the documentary, introduced by Sir Roger himself, in November at the Bath Town and Country Club (date to be confirmed). Tickets will cost £5 for the pre-event reception and screening with an optional dinner afterwards (at additional cost). Please contact Lucy on lucy@britozwest.org.uk if you would like further details.

Finally, we wish our President, Richard Pavitt, a safe stay in hospital this week followed by a very speedy recovery from his operation and a return to good health.

Lucy Townsend
Branch Administrator
6 Forester Road
Bath BA2 6QF

**Australia Day Service and Lunch
24 January 2016**

The service will be held at Wells Cathedral on Sunday January 24th, 2016. Further information on keynote speaker and lunch venue will be issued in due course.

SERVICES



EXCELLENT VALUE AUSTRALIAN WINES

<http://www.tesco.com/wine/zone/default.aspx?name=britain-australia-society>

Click here for details of the latest wine club offers from the Britain-Australia Wine Club

A reminder that subscriptions for 2015/16 were due on 1 April. Thank you to all who have made payment to date. If you have not yet paid for the coming year, payments can be made by cheque and sent to the address below or by bank transfer details available on request. Your continued support is important to us and we hope you will wish to continue to be part of these exciting events.