

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 JUNE 2015

Note from the Chairman - Keith Newton



Lt Gen John Caligari AO DSC, Australian Army, Keith Newton and Catherine Constant at the Infantry Officer's Mess, Warminster

Dear Branch Members and Friends,

It was good to catch up with many of you at the centenary ANZAC commemoration service and lunch last month at Warminster and Sutton Veny. Wonderful speeches from Brigadier Bill Sowry, Lady Emma Kitchener and Professor Carl Bridge, and a good time to remember and reflect on the sacrifices and courage shown by the ANZACS at Gallipoli and all Australian and British service personnel in wars over the years. It was fantastic the Revd. Paul Burden, the prior Vicar of St Nicholas Bathampton, and long-term friend of the Branch was able to join us and say Grace.

We also held our AGM at the Warminster Officers' Mess and I am pleased to report the membership and finances of the branch are strong and we have an exciting list of activities for the coming year including the Sutton Veny Cricket match (June 14); The Bathampton Admiral Arthur Phillip Birthday service and luncheon this year to

be addressed by Mrs Nicola Downer AM (October 12), and the Australia day service and birthday in January (see below or on the branch web site for details).

Earlier this month I represented the branch at the institution service for the new vicar at St Nicholas Church Bathampton, The Rev Jonty Frith. Rev Frith and his young family of four boys are already enjoying life in the West Country and were keen to learn more about St Nicholas's Australian connection and Admiral Arthur Phillip and to continue the special relationship with the Britain-Australia Society and our branch. I also had a brief opportunity to talk about preparations for the October 12 Service with Rev Frith and Church members.

I have also attended the National BAS AGM where I was elected to the National Committee and met Mrs Menna Rawlings CMG, the new British High Commissioner to Australia. The Society nationally is working well under Chairman, Peter Benson's leadership and Dale Eaton's management. The Office lease has been extended at Australia House and there is a very exciting list of activities available to all members in both London and the Branches - see listings on the national Web site.

I look forward to seeing you all at the events planned this year.

Keith Newton

Branch Chairman

ANZAC Day Luncheon and Service of Remembrance – 26 April 2015



Keith Newton and Brigadier Bill Sowry at the Infantry Officer's Mess, Warminster

In this centennial year commemorating the ANZAC landings at Gallipoli, 70 members, guests and friends gathered at the Infantry Officer's Mess in Warminster and later at St John's Church, Sutton Veny to remember those who fought and those who lost their lives in the conflict. We were joined by representatives of the Australian and New Zealand High Commissions, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as well as honoured guests, Professor Bridges and Lady Emma Kitchener.

The event began with drinks and a welcome from Brigadier Sowry, Head, Australian Defence Staff & Defence Adviser UK, Defence Attaché Ireland and The Netherlands. Due to last minute changes in schedule, Lord Fellowes was unable to attend. However, his wife, Lady Emma Kitchener, welcomed guests referencing her great uncle and his relationship with Gallipoli and the Anzacs.



Lady Emma Kitchener

Rounding off the speeches, we were treated to an extremely thought provoking alternative view of the often misperceived action at Gallipoli by Prof Carl Bridge of King's College, London. Prof Bridge outlined the gains made elsewhere in the conflict as a result of the campaign and holding the Ottoman Empire in check.



Catherine Constant and Prof Carl Bridge

Following luncheon, guests attended the Service of Remembrance at St John's, Sutton Veny where wreaths were laid in commemoration by amongst others:

Sir Christopher Benson for the Britain-Australia Society; Lindsey Birrell for London Legacy; Brigadier Bill Sowry for the Australian High Commission; Daniel Taylor for the New Zealand High Commission;



Standard Bearers at St John's Church, Sutton Veny

For further photographs of the event, please see the Britain-Australia website:

<http://www.britozwest.org.uk/picture-gallery.asp>

Following the 22nd:

<http://www.anzac-22nd-battalion.com/>

We also received an email from Greg Stephens who has established a post Gallipoli project that tells the story of an Australian infantry battalion through the lives of the 154 men that his grandfather sailed and fought with in the 5th/22nd and were among the original landings at Gallipoli. Greg's grandfather, George Stephens, who was wounded on four occasions and received the Military Medal, also spent some time at Sutton Veny before returning to Australia with his new English bride. Greg attended the service with his father, George's youngest son.

Please follow the web address to access this interesting information.

Britain-Australia West Country Branch Annual General Meeting – 26 April

The AGM was held at the Infantry Officer's Mess prior to the Anzac Day Commemoration. The meeting was chaired by Committee Member, David Leonard. Lady Heath tendered her resignation for a second time after many years as a member of the West Country Branch Committee which was accepted. David Leonard gave thanks to her for her long term commitment. All other members of the Committee were re-elected. David Leonard, along with Richard Pavitt, also thanked Keith Newton for his work over the past year and expressed how grateful they are to have him onboard.



David Leonard and Lucy Townsend

Forthcoming events:

CRICKET THIS SUMMER

**Australia House Cricket Club
vs Sutton Veny & Heytesbury Cricket Club
Sunday, 14 June 2015
Sutton Veny Village Hall BA12 7AP**

Join us for a great day of fun, food, (hopefully sunshine) and of course, cricket! The cricket match will take place on the beautiful Sutton Veny Village Green where you will be able to partake of a BBQ and picnic, raffles and awards. Proceedings start at 11am. Please see full details below:

Location: Sutton Veny Cricket Ground (Grid Reference 903417, Postcode BA12 7AP see map at [Google Maps](#))

Timings/Format: Limited over match (40 overs), first ball at 11am, lunch between innings (c 1.30pm) and tea before the prize-giving and then a raffle

Catering: cash bar open all day, bar-b-q over lunch and cricket tea (payment by donation) after the match – picnics may be brought

Prize-giving: At the end of the day followed by a raffle

Raffle: Money raised goes towards Sutton Veny Cricket Club (tbc)

Parking: In High Street

Tentage etc: There will be a light-weight marquee for shade and cover from showers, some tables and chairs will be laid out but you are advised to bring your own and rugs etc.

Children: The more the merrier!

There will be no charge for this event.



Keith and Leyanne Newton with Digger Bear (raffle prize for the Cricket!)

**Admiral Arthur Phillip Birthday Celebrations
12 October 2015**



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

We are delighted to announce a new venue for the celebrations that will take place this year 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.

We are thrilled to have as our keynote speaker, Mrs Nicola Downer AM who 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

SERVICES

The Britain-Australia Society Wine Club
in partnership with
 **TESCO** Wine by the case

<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

Finally, a reminder that subscriptions for 2015/16 were due on 1 April. 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.

Lucy Townsend
Branch Administrator
6 Forester Road
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