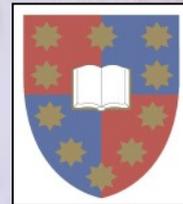




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The monthly
• newsletter •
of the Public
Schools' Club



October • 2017

Celebrating the language

Members of the Royal Commonwealth Society congratulated **Mrs Margaret Lord** on her retirement from the Association's Council, at a luncheon at the Club on Friday 22nd September.



Mrs Lord firstly joined the Royal Commonwealth Society in the 1940s and soon became heavily involved in leadership within the Association. She served on its Council for decades, including for many years as President of the organisation.

One of her great interests in the RCS was promoting English. Amazingly, Annika Turon-Semmens (in Year 10 at Pembroke) won this year's Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition, against 12,300 entries - a first for the nation of Australia.

Commending Annika's outstanding achievement, that will be rewarded by the Duchess of Cornwall at Buckingham Palace, Society President Mrs Libby Ellis remarked to Margaret Lord, "We could not give you a better parting gift than for Adelaide to have won the Commonwealth Essay Competition."

"I've been waiting for a long time for this," Margaret replied.

"To have a kid here today who has won that absolute accolade ... has really made my day," she continued.



"As old as I am, I haven't lost my ability to view the aspirant - the person who attains something higher than just mediocre.

"You have to aspire," she stated to **Annika Turon-Semmens** and the 40 guests at the luncheon.

"To me the very back-bone of the Royal Commonwealth Society is the Queen's English," she continued.

"Today it seems the norm to downgrade so many things of quality. But our language is very important.

"Please don't ever let it wane. The spoken word has lost a lot of its emphasis and I think that is a shame," she said.

"There is nothing finer anywhere than English, promoted no matter whether it is written or spoken. For it to be promoted is an asset to all of us. We have a lot to lose."



Members and guests at the lunch enjoyed hearing some of the exploits of Margaret in her various duties with the RCS.

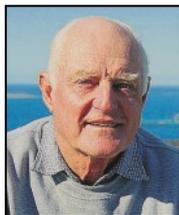
During the last several years, Margaret Lord has attended more than 600 meetings of the Royal Commonwealth Society and various kindred groups, as part of her unflagging devotion to duty and service.

A dedicated baker of cakes for the Association's Christmas lunches, Mrs Lord used 14 kilos of flour, six kilos of sugar, six kilos of butter, 18 kilos of fruit and a dozen bottles of brandy!



Marking 100 years of the Commonwealth Railway

Former Port Lincoln Mayor **Peter Davis** spoke about the story of Australia's Transcontinental Railway at a meeting in the Club on Saturday 14th October - just a few days ahead of the railway's centenary on 17th October 2017.



The bank was established by a grant of the Federal Parliament and the funds assisted drought-stricken farm owners, first home buyers and the railway.



Peter commended the banking expertise of the parliamentarian **Mr King O'Malley** (1854-1953), who had to outwit his rival Billy Hughes, when establishing the Commonwealth Bank, prior to the War.

Commencing in 1912, the railway took five years to build, in drought, hardship and partly during the First World War.

"One hundred years ago, blokes were out there with no air-conditioning, in the heat and cold of the desert," he said.

"The Commonwealth Bank financed the Commonwealth Railway - with no national debt," Peter Davis explained.

It was known as *The People's Bank*.

"Prime Minister Turnbull is trying to build a rail link joining Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane but doesn't know where he will get the \$8.4 billion they think it's going to cost," Mr Davis noted.

He recommended a sovereign credit scheme, similar to the system used by the original Commonwealth Bank.

O'Malley was a Tasmanian federal MP and former SA colonial parliamentarian who promoted independent banking.

"The Transcontinental Railway stands as irrefutable truth of what our great grandfathers delivered and how it was financed," Peter Davis concluded.

Dedicating the fireplace

Immediately following the recent Annual General Meeting, Members of the Club retired to the Johnston Bar and with charged glasses toasted the Ashton Hearth, which the President CDC Ashton ceremoniously unveiled.

He cut the ribbon using a sword belonging to a deceased Club Member, Lieutenant Gawler Ashton (the President's grandfather) who served in France during the First World War and joined the Club in his senior years.

Prior to wielding the sword, the President remarked on the fireplace and the Edwardian mantelpiece which came from a house at Leabrook.

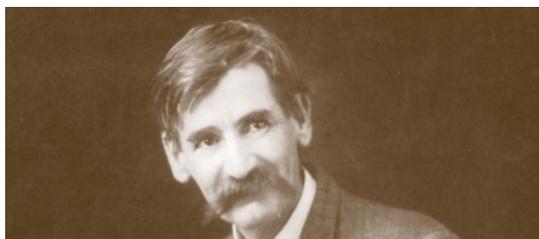
"The fireplace is of imperial size, which fitted the mantelpiece. They are both original from the era, and the tiles are from England," he explained.

In deference to its craftsmanship, Members refrained from hurling their emptied classes into the fireplace but instead confined their attention to the Chairman reciting an excerpt from Henry Lawson's poem *To Jim*:



To Jim - Henry Lawson

I gaze upon my son once more,
With eyes and heart that tire,
As solemnly he stands before
The screen drawn round the fire;
With hands behind clasped hand in hand,
Now loosely and now fast —
Just as his fathers used to stand
For generations past.



A fair and slight and childish form,
And big brown thoughtful eyes —
God help him! for a life of storm
And stress before him lies:
A wanderer and a gipsy wild,
I've learnt the world and know,
For I was such another child —
Ah, many years ago!

But in those dreamy eyes of him
There is no hint of doubt —
I wish that you could tell me, Jim,
The things you dream about.
Dream on, my son, that all is true
And things not what they seem —
'Twill be a bitter day for you
When wakened from your dream.

You are a child of field and flood,
But with the gipsy strains
A strong Norwegian sailor's blood
Is running through your veins.
Be true, and slander never stings,
Be straight, and all may frown —
You'll have the strength to grapple things
That dragged your father down.

These lines I write with bitter tears
And failing heart and hand,
But you will read in after years,
And you will understand:
You'll hear the slander of the crowd,
They'll whisper tales of shame,
But days will come when you'll be proud
To bear your father's name. [1905]