



The Cambridge Society of NSW

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President's Report on 8 March 2017 to the 2016 Annual General Meeting

Welcome one and all to the 2017 AGM of the Cambridge Society of New South Wales.

The Society is a social association of Cambridge University alumni in New South Wales. We organise formal and informal social functions where members and their guests can meet fellow alumni, maintain and renew old friendships and make new ones, bonded together by their heritage of the world's finest academic and intellectual institution.

I am pleased to say that 2016 was filled with a very busy calendar of events, including new formats instigated by our newer and younger Committee members.

- We kicked off the year with a full house of 60 members and guests entertained by Ross Gittin's witty talk on "Budgets, Bulldust and Bastardry".
- Next we had our inaugural 'Young Oxbridge' networking event, which I gather was a huge success. Sadly I have too many grey hairs these days to pass for 'Young Oxbridge'.
- Dr Anthony Lowe got us thinking at twilight about 'The ethics of cancer treatment - what our society can afford'. A sobering talk which did, however, give us cause for optimism.
- We had two College Choirs touring in 2016 – Christ's and Trinity. CamSoc laid on drinks at the Establishment Hotel after the Trinity event. As I observed our bar tab rapidly shrink, I concluded that choral singing must be very thirsty work.
- At our key event of the year, the Winter Feast at the Royal Sydney, we were honoured to have Mike Cannon-Brookes talk to us about "The importance of the Australian diaspora to our future as a nimble, agile and innovative country".
- In response to calls from members for more 'social' events there was a Trivia Night at the Lord Dudley. Whether they came for the trivia or the Dudley's renowned beer selection, there was an excellent turnout, despite the rain.
- On the sporting front, we had the Oxbridge croquet day early in the year and then the annual golf challenge with Oxford, in which I'm delighted to say Chris Golis and Peter Buchen proudly retained the trophy for Cambridge.
- We ended the year with the traditional Christmas Drinks and our guest for the concluding Thinking at Twilight was the illustrious Cambridge economist, Professor Geoffrey Harcourt .



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2017 Events

I can promise you the Committee is planning a busy events schedule of events for 2017, commencing with the Thinking at Twilight right after this AGM. So keep watching out for the email updates – and can I remind you to please renew your membership if you haven't already done so.

The next event will be the Oxbridge croquet day on 2 April at Cammeray. This is a fun day out for players of all abilities. I would encourage you to give it a try. Details are on the website.

Financials

Accounts are available from the Administrator, Suzie Ruse. Paid up membership numbers in 2016 reached 151 members, which is up from the previous year. We again finished the 2016 year in reasonable financial shape. At the beginning of the year the cash on hand was \$21,521. At the end of the year the cash balance had increased by around \$450 to \$21,973, which I'm sure we'd all agree is a satisfactory outcome.

The financial principles of the Society are to break-even on functions and cover the fixed costs by membership fees. For six years we managed to keep the annual fees at \$40. In 2017 we finally had to relent and increased the membership fee by \$5 to \$45. As we usually do, we are going to ask that the Committee have the right to increase fees for 2018 by \$5 to \$50. I doubt that we will need to implement another increase so soon, but the Committee believes it must continue to have the flexibility.

On the administrative front, Suzie Ruse, continues to do a great job in her role of administrator. My personal thanks and that of the Committee go to her for all the assistance she has given me and the Society in the last year.

Committee

Alistair Newmarch has agreed to continue as Treasurer and Alison Ross as Secretary.

Chris Dawson wishes to remain as Vice-President and the Committee has asked me to continue as President.

The rest of the Committee comprises Julie-Anne Bosich, Emma Brown, Rhiannon Chisholm, Rhys Goodey, Alex Palmer, Liza Rybak, Chandra Senaratne, Sasha Shevtsova, Gautham Srinivas and Jonathan Negus (who we welcome back after a year's surgical training in the UK).

They have all indicated they wish to continue as Committee members. And may I take this opportunity to thank all the Committee members and office bearers for their efforts during 2016.



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We will be electing Office Bearers and Committee members shortly. If anyone else wishes to stand you should be aware the Committee meets quarterly on the second Wednesday of the second month of each quarter at my house.

That will conclude the AGM and Alistair Newmarch will then introduce tonight's Thinking at Twilight speakers, our fellow alumni Geraint Lewis and Luke Barnes, authors of "A Fortunate Universe".

Before we proceed to the formal business of the AGM, let's take a moment to remember our fellow alumnus Dan Vickerman who so sadly passed away a couple of weeks ago. Many of you will know that Dan was an enthusiastic supporter of anything Cambridge and we will fondly recall his Winter Feast talk in 2012.

We now move to the formal proceedings of the AGM.

Amrit Bahra
President, Cambridge Society of NSW