



The Cambridge Society of NSW

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President's Report to the 2015 Annual General Meeting on 26 May 2016

I am delighted to welcome you all to the 2016 AGM of the Cambridge Society of New South Wales, my inaugural AGM as President of the Society.

The Cambridge Society of New South Wales 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.

In 2015 we continued with a similar format of events as previous years; a series of "Thinking at Twilight" seminars, the Winter Feast, the Christmas Drinks, and a sprinkling of sporting events.

- The first Thinking at Twilight Seminar was held on 25 February. Alumni gathered here at the UUSC to hear committee member Chandra Senaratne speak on reincarnation.
- The second Thinking at Twilight Seminar was held on 26 March. We welcomed Professor David Yates from Robinson College who was visiting Sydney. Professor Yates is also an Adjunct Professor of Law in the University of Sydney. He talked about "What do Clients want from their Lawyers".
- The AGM was held on 21 May. Emma Brown then introduced our guest speaker for the third Thinking at Twilight, fellow alumnus Simon Blackburn who leads the Digital Practice at McKinsey. Simon spoke on how the digital revolution is reshaping business and how Australian companies should respond. A large audience was treated to a fascinating talk which was followed by insightful Q&A.
- The Annual Winter Feast was again held at the Royal Sydney Golf Club on Wednesday 2 September 2015. We were delighted to welcome Cambridge alumnus, The Honourable Justice Melissa Perry as our Guest Speaker. Justice Perry was appointed to the Federal Court of Australia in September 2013. Justice Perry spoke passionately about "Shattering Glass and Bamboo ceilings – Benefiting from Diversity". Guests will recall a fellow alumnus was taken ill during Justice Perry's talk. Fortunately, and as you'd expect at a Cambridge function, there were many doctors in the house and, importantly, some of the medical variety. It was truly fitting to the subject matter of the talk that the three medics who immediately came forward were all female. We are grateful to Drs Roo Robinson and Dedee Murrell and her guest Sharleen Hill for tending to the emergency. I am pleased to say our affected guest was discharged from hospital, fully fit, a few days later.
- On the sporting front the Seventh Annual Golf Match versus Oxford was held on 9 November at Manly. The result was a draw again at 3-3. Daryl Dixon, Richard Lyon and past President Chris Golis won their matches. Fellow team



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members Nicole Van Der Laak, Peter Wilson and James Balfour found Manly somewhat challenging.

- The annual Cricket Match against Oxford was sadly cancelled this year due to St Paul's Oval being renovated. Hopefully St Paul's Oval will be ready this year.
- The Annual Christmas Drinks were again hosted by Chris Dawson at the UUSC on 2 December. In conjunction the Society hosted its fourth Thinking at Twilight Seminar. Professor John Snowdon AM, Cambridge alumnus, was our guest speaker and spoke on "Too Much Mess" - are you a hoarder or do you purge your clutter?" A fascinating insight into an area we have all heard about but knew little about.

2016 Events

This year has already seen a Thinking at Twilight event, on 2 March. We were honoured to have Ross Gittins, Cambridge alumnus and Economics Editor of the Sydney Morning Herald as our guest speaker, talking on "Budgets, Bulldust and Bastardry". There was a large turnout for a very entertaining talk in which Ross spoke with his hallmark candour and (perhaps less well known) humour.

The annual Oxbridge croquet day followed on 3 April at Cammeray. This is a fun day out for players of all abilities. I would encourage you to give it a try next year.

We welcomed three new Committee members this year, Sasha Shevtsova, Alex Palmer and Gautam Srinivas. As more recent graduates they bring some youthful vigour and fresh ideas to the Committee. I hear they even plan to give the Society a proper presence on some interweb thing called 'FaceBook'.

Sasha, Alex and Gautam wasted no time in organising a Networking Drinks evening for Young Oxbridge alumni, which was held on 28 April. I am too old to have qualified for the event but am told the evening was a roaring success. It was, after all, held in a wine bar.

Our major event of the year, the Annual Winter Feast is again being held at the Royal Sydney Golf Club on 25 August 2016. Mike Cannon-Brookes is an alumnus of Trinity Hall and a successful businessman who has lived in many major cities across the world and has led major organisations such as IBM, Citibank and Freehills.

Mike is a Board member of 'Advance', the largest global network of high achieving Australians and alumni of Australian universities. The importance of the work of this organisation has been recognised by the Prime Minister, who is a Patron.



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It is in his capacity as a leader of 'Advance' that Mike will speak about "The importance of the Australian diaspora to our future as a nimble, agile and innovative country".

The dress code will be Lounge Suit. The cost which includes dinner and drinks is \$130 for members and \$160 for guests, which I am pleased to say is the same as last year.

Financials

Accounts are available from the Administrator, Suzie Ruse. Paid up membership numbers in 2015 reached 138 members. We again finished the 2015 year in reasonable financial shape. At the beginning of the year the cash on hand was \$21,076.15. At the end of the year the cash balance was \$19,590 a decrease of \$1,485.

The financial principles of the Society are to break-even on functions and cover the fixed costs by membership fees. For the last six years we have asked members to give the Committee the right to increase the annual fees \$5 to \$45. And each year the Committee has decided to keep the membership at \$40. Again we are going ask that the Committee have the right to increase fees for 2017 by \$5 or \$10 to \$50. The Committee is not saying it will increase fees but it 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. As Jonathan Negus is away on specialist surgical training this year the position of Secretary has been filled by Alison Ross.

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 and Gautham Srivinas.

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 2015.



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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 Thursday of the second month of each quarter at my house.

At the end of this AGM Emma Brown will be introducing our tonight's Thinking at Twilight Speaker, alumnus Dr Anthony Lowe who is the Chief Executive Officer of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia speaking on ***"The Ethics of Cancer Treatments - What Can Our Society Afford?"***

Before we move on the formal business of the AGM, I would like to propose a vote of thanks for Chris Golis, who presided over the Society for many years. Chris has been instrumental in making the Society the vibrant organisation which we are all proud to support and be associated with and which reflects the best of the Cambridge tradition.