

## The Commonwealth of Nations

The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 53 member states encompassing over 2 billion people. Directed by the Commonwealth Heads of Government and administered by the Commonwealth Secretariat in London. Each member state affirms the Commonwealth Values and principles:

- International Peace and Security
- Democracy
- Human Rights
- Tolerance and Respect
- Separation of Powers
- Rule of Law
- Freedom of Expression
- Development
- Gender Equality
- Access to Health and Education
- Good Governance
- Civil Society.

The Heads of Government meet every two years to advance the values of the Commonwealth.

In March 2013 Queen Elizabeth as Head of the Commonwealth signed into being a new Commonwealth Charter approved by every member Head of State.

For more information visit [www.thercs.org](http://www.thercs.org)

Three intergovernmental organizations carry out the work of the Commonwealth. The **Commonwealth Secretariat** carries out programs of work based on mandates set by the Commonwealth Heads of Government. The **Commonwealth Foundation** is resourced by and reports to the Commonwealth Heads of Government and guided by Commonwealth values and priorities. Its mandate is to strengthen civil society. **The Commonwealth of Learning** has a mandate to encourage the development and sharing of open learning/distance education, knowledge, resources and technologies and is Headquartered in Vancouver, Canada.

There are over 90 civil society and professional organizations who work together across borders to advance the aspirations of the Commonwealth.

## The Vancouver Island Branch of the Royal Commonwealth Society of Canada



The Vancouver Island Branch is one of several semi autonomous branches in Canada affiliated with the Royal Commonwealth Society of Canada headquartered in Ottawa. RCS Canada is affiliated with RCS International headquartered in London, England.

## The Royal Commonwealth Society International Organization.

Founded in 1865, the Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS) is an international Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) working to promote an understanding of the nature and working of the Commonwealth and of the factors which shape the lives of its peoples and the policies of its governments. The RCS is supported by a worldwide membership of over 10,000, with self governing branches, honorary representatives and affiliated organizations in 39 countries and territories. The international headquarters are in London, England. For more information [www.thercs.org](http://www.thercs.org)

## The Royal Commonwealth Society of Canada

The objective of RCS Canada is to promote in Canada the increase and dissemination of knowledge respecting the Commonwealth, its member countries, their peoples, culture and lives, to maintain the best traditions and values of the Commonwealth, and to support the Government of Canada in taking leadership roles in the activities of the Commonwealth.

## RCS Vancouver Island Branch

In 1919 a charter was granted to the Royal Colonial Institute, Vancouver Island Branch. In 1928 the name was changed to the Royal Empire Society and in 1957 to the Royal Commonwealth Society.

The main focus of the Branch is to gain a greater understanding of Commonwealth through presentations and education, and to promote a better understanding of the Commonwealth. We support the annual Student Commonwealth Conference and annually pay the registration fee for 2 students to attend the Student Commonwealth Forum in Ottawa.

The Branch holds lunch meetings on the third Thursday of the month from September to June, excluding October and January, at Royal Oak Golf Club. We have a special luncheon on Commonwealth Day, which is the second Monday of March. Hosted by our Patron, the Lieutenant Governor, and held at Government House, a message from the Queen is relayed at the event.

The Annual General Meeting is held in June where the Branch members elect the new officers to take office.

More information about the RCS is available on the internet at [www.rcs.ca](http://www.rcs.ca).

## Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Dues are \$60 per couple or \$40 for a single person. Students \$20.

Cheques should be made out to :-  
"RCS Vancouver Island Branch"  
and mailed to:-

President,  
RCS VI Branch,  
#4-2525 Oakville Avenue,  
Sidney, V8L 1V9,  
British Columbia.

A tax receipt will be issued for half of the annual dues. All other donations are issued with a tax receipt.

Enquiries can be e mailed to  
[wendy.g.halliday@shaw.ca](mailto:wendy.g.halliday@shaw.ca) or  
[vancouverisland@rcs.ca](mailto:vancouverisland@rcs.ca)  
or phone 250 544 1120