



Dated May 2020

Vision Impaired Accessible Document



THE NEW (OLD) GOLDEN RULE - COBBER

little more kindness, a little less creed,
A little more giving, a little less greed;
A little more smile, a little less frown.
A little less kicking a man when he's down;
A little more "We", a little less 'I',
A little more laugh, a little less cry.

Russ Tyson OAM (dec)

NOTICES & EXCLUSIONS:

This is our sixth attempt at an accessible version, feedback would be welcome.

This version of our National magazine is not intended for general distribution to the wider public but is prepared as a service to those of our members who require the use of vision-impaired screen-reader technology. Thus, certain pages of the hard-copy version involving complex graphics or page layout have been omitted.

A summary of these pages and other notes of a general nature will be listed here.

GENERAL CONTACT INFORMATION.

National Office – Email: oaasecretariat@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

National Secretary – To Be Advised. Email: natsec@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear All,

When I penned my last message we were at the start of the year and our thoughts were dominated by the bushfires and the tragedies and hardships that were pervasive in their wake.

To this anxiety has now been added Covid-19 and the enormous disruption and cost it is imposing here and around the world. Unfortunately, it forced us to cancel our National Conference in Darwin. This was hard for many as so much effort had gone into its planning. However, we plan to regroup in Darwin next year and this will hopefully be an occasion for reflection and celebration.

It's interesting to observe that neither of these calamities is economic in nature but both have huge economic consequences, consequences which are placing pressure on Governments, businesses and households. It is also interesting that both go to the fundamental resilience of our nation: can we manage our natural environment better to meet the destructive impacts of bushfires, are our emergency services able to respond to sustained pressure; and in the case of the virus, is our national, state and regional health infrastructure able to control and defeat this disease, is our science able to contribute to the global effort to deliver an effective treatment and vaccine.

Yet, in my view, the most important parallel is that both, at their essence, rely on community action, on action by us acting together in our shared interest, if they were to be controlled and overcome.

In the case of the fires, volunteers and emergency service workers risking their lives to fight the fires, people caring for each other, many behaving with extraordinary generosity to support those in need, and others assisting with the recovery; and in relation to the virus, first line workers consistently putting themselves at risk to help others, and the community, despite a few recalcitrants, being willing to profoundly change their way of life to defeat the disease.

So, two gut wrenching challenges and both times our communities have shown they're capable of rising to the challenge. Powerful stuff! It is clear that Covid-19 will continue to put enormous pressure on us for many months to come. However, we can take heart from the demonstrated strength and resilience of our community.

There has been a long historic debate about whether there is such a thing as a society and that we're all about individualism. The events of this year have well and truly put the strength of our society, and the idea that our fortunes are linked, to the fore. Our Association, which is all about community building, is well placed to contribute over the difficult months that lie ahead.

Keep well.

Heather Ridout AO

NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The past year is one in which your Association has achieved a considerable amount. Pleasure at our achievements is dimmed by recognition of the hardship and loss endured by so many in In my last Chairman's Report in the February issue of this magazine I anticipated meeting with many members at our national conference in Darwin in May this year. As I write we are all restricted in our travel and we have had to cancel the national conference. The NT Branch conference committee worked hard at providing an event that attracted registrations from almost 200 members and guests. I am sure we all share their disappointment but look forward to getting back into 'conferencing mode' as soon as we are able. Our aim is to provide an equally 'enticing' conference in Darwin in May 2021.

The draft of our new national constitution is now available for members' comment and is discussed in detail later in this issue of the magazine. The Constitution Working Party, under the leadership of Professor Robin Watts AM, has given us a governing document that should guide us well in future years. Members are encouraged to read the constitution and provide comments and questions to Branch nominated directors. We plan to ask members to adopt the new constitution at our AGM in May 2021.

Receptions for new recipients in the Order have been a key part of encouraging them to join our Association. The present circumstances have meant that many of the receptions planned for this year's Australia Day Honours recipients have not been held, and receptions for Queen's Birthday Honours recipients must be in doubt. We can still all play a part in reaching out (not by hand!) to new entrants to the Order and explaining the benefits of joining us.

Your national Board has bidden farewell to several members and welcomed new, as have many of our Branch Committees. On behalf of all members I thank those throughout our

Association who are retiring, those who continue to serve and welcome those newcomers who are prepared to take up the challenge of leadership.

To describe the year to date as turbulent would be a great understatement. Our Association, in company with the rest of Australia, will continue to be challenged for some time to come. Our already demonstrated positive response to this challenge will see us all emerge from the present crisis in good order.

Until we can meet again.....

Barry Nunn AO
National Chairman
Western Australia Branch

NATIONAL ARTICLE – IN CONTEXT OF COVID-19

CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCE - GENERAL ANGUS CAMPBELL, AO, DSC

“Building a Security Community in the Indo-Pacific”

**Australian Defence Force Oration 2019
Order of Australia Association (ACT Branch)
25 June 2019**

***“Building a Security Community in the Indo-Pacific”*
A PRECIS OF AN ARTICLE IN THE NOVEMBER 2019
EDITION
REPEATED HERE IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19
AND OUR PACIFIC FAMILY**

Good evening ladies and gentlemen.

....

Tonight, I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the breadth of security challenges facing our region, and discuss how Australia, with a focus on the Southwest Pacific, is responding.

....

A century ago, the world was at the tail-end of an influenza pandemic that was on the same terrible scale as the loss of life in the First World War.

Tens-of-millions died between April 1918 and May 1919: the strong, the healthy, the young. The ‘Spanish flu’ was relentless. It would leap from ship to shore, and from shore to ship. Island communities, especially those of the South Pacific, experienced

some of the most severe outbreaks. Local authorities were unable to cope. Health workers soon started falling ill, and drugs were in short supply.

Back in Sydney, in November 1918, HMAS *Encounter* was ordered to embark as soon as possible to Samoa. It was to be the Royal Australian Navy's first post-war overseas humanitarian and disaster relief operation. *Encounter* moved at remarkable speed. Within ten days, it had docked at Suva in Fiji with 150 tonnes of cargo. Hours later, it was on its way to Apia in Samoa.

It was during that trip to Samoa that the commanding officer, Captain Hugh Thring, asked for volunteers to go ashore if the need proved greater than anticipated. The work promised to be dangerous and unpleasant. It meant being left behind and missing the first peacetime Christmas. But almost everyone aboard put their hand up.

....

Today, the Indo-Pacific is a stage upon which many of the uncertainties — and challenges — that define our age are playing out.

....

Australia is stepping up our contribution to regional stability: that's one of our highest defence and security priorities. We recognise we must do more to preserve and strengthen the institutions that promote regional peace and security. We must double-down on our relationships with our friends and neighbours and deepen our engagement and partnerships.

.....

But what should be stressed is the *manner* of the engagement. *That matters*. That matters just as much as the outcome. Australia sees itself as a *partner* in these efforts. Not an owner ...not a director ...not a superior. We have and we will continue to listen to the wants and the needs of our neighbours; to their aspirations

.....

Being present. Working *with* our neighbours. Building *their* and *our* security resilience. Australia is playing its part. And we are, I emphasise, stepping up — *not starting up* — right across the Indo-Pacific region.

.....

After reaching Samoa, HMAS *Encounter*'s mission was supposed to end. But Captain Thring had received a message during the ship's brief stop in Fiji. The conditions in Tonga, he was told, were at least as bad as in Samoa. The facilities were worse.

So Thring made a decision: he would extend the mission. Two days after visiting Samoa — where She dropped off personnel and supplies — *Encounter* reached Nuku'alofa in Tonga. Thring sent his last surgeon ashore, accompanied by five orderlies. They took with them the remaining drugs. It was a small contribution — but one that made a big difference to the Tongan community. Captain Thring made the right decision.

....

We have the understanding. We have the mindset. And we know what must be done.

Above all, it's the manner of our engagement, the trust we create, the patterns of cooperation we display. These are as important as, and essential to, the common outcome we seek to achieve: a stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific.

Thank you.

(**Full text at**)

<https://www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/here.pdf>

New South Wales Branch

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Notwithstanding the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic disruptions to our daily life, I would like to focus on the positive news from NSW.

We congratulate the 260 Australia Day Awards recipients, including our Patron, the NSW Governor Her Excellency, The Honorable Margaret Beazely AC, who was previously awarded an AO. We look forward to celebrating the Australia Day Awards with all new recipients when the current restrictions on meetings are lifted. And we welcome the more than 40 new awardees who have joined our Association from across the State.

While it is not possible to hold face to face meetings, we are endeavouring to stay in touch with our Members through regular email updates, and have implemented a communications plan to share stories of how Members are dealing with these challenging new times. Called "Thanks for Asking", we will share these stories on our website at

<https://www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/nsw/news>

Our 2400 members all have amazing stories to tell, and we hope to stay in touch with as many as possible while we are all looking forward to life as it was, or a version of it, later in the year.

One such story is from Patricia Johnson OAM in Port Macquarie. Patricia received her Award in 2004, for her commitment to the local community while also teaching science, music and Japanese at the local High School. (see article)

We are also looking at ways to enhance Membership Value and will report on this later in the year.

We held our AGM on February 25, welcoming 45 Members and guests, and confirmed our Committee going forward. (see list)

The Hunter Region managed to hold a welcome lunch for Australia Day recipients in the region, on 22 February, before restrictions were in place. (see article)

On March 7 we welcomed >70 Members and guests at a very interesting Forum, with Guest Speaker Gemma Sisia, who shared stories about her work in Tanzania with the School of St Jude which she founded 18 years ago. Gemma comes from Armidale where her family, including her 7 brothers farmed >40,000 hectares, supporting around 80,000 sheep during the height of wool production; along with cattle, chickens, and horses. (see article)

We have been implementing The Youth Community Service Awards for 27 years; in recent years capably managed by Committee Member Dr Frank Kelleher AM, however sadly following advice from the NSW Department of Education, the Awards program for NSW High School and Community College students will be put on hold until 2021.

"Until we meet again", as they say, I and our Committee wish everyone good health and wellbeing during this testing period for all on Planet Earth.

Peter Falk OAM

<https://www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/nsw/about-us/>

Mrs Patricia Johnson OAM

Mrs Patricia Johnson OAM, who received her Australian Honours Award in 2004, was recognized for her commitment to the local community of Port Macquarie while also teaching science, music, and Japanese at the local Primary School. Patricia was also a Teacher Librarian.

In 1988 Patricia, together with a number of very dedicated local musicians established The Hastings Koala Orchestra.

The Orchestra includes people from all age groups and was invited to play at the Sydney Entertainment Centre and participate in the Closing Ceremony of the Pan Pacific Games during the Bi-Centennial celebrations in 1988. The RTA (NSW Government) donated a train to take the orchestra and their instruments from Wauchope to Newcastle as 283 members of the Bi-Centennial Orchestra were from the Hastings Valley area. They took part in 1000 musicians playing together for a world record

As a result of a young Japanese student at the Port Macquarie High School talking about an Art and Cultural Festival in Hokkaido Japan, Patricia formed an orchestra which travelled to Hokkaido in 1989. They took part in the signing of the "Sister City" agreement between Port Macquarie and Handa City.

Since then, the Orchestra, with Patricia as its Musical Director and Conductor, has travelled to Japan more than 16 times, performing in Sapporo, Tokyo Disneyland, Handa City, Kyoto, Sakura and Mikasa. They also perform at local NSW venues including Dreamworld, Seaworld, Marina Mirage on the Gold Coast, Pacific Fair shopping Centre, Darling Harbour and Martin Plaza.

The orchestra was scheduled to be in Japan this year, but due to the current travel restrictions, this trip will be postponed into 2021. In April 2019 we toured Japan. It was 30 years since we had first performed there.

The Orchestra receives a small grant from the Hastings Council each year to cover its overheads, and raises money through local fundraising at eg Bunnings, and through Raffles, and doing car washes, and delivering phone books to support local charities including providing assistance for affordable housing for cancer patients undergoing treatment in local hospitals.

Patricia will be like many of us, practicing what some call "SOCDIS" Social Distancing, until travel is possible again. Two more concerts are in planning at The Panthers in Port Macquarie, to support Rotary Lodge.

We appreciate Patricia sharing her story, which is no doubt one of many which hopefully we will hear about from other NSW Order of Australia Association NSW Branch in the coming months.

Every one of our >2400 members has made a significant contribution to communities in NSW and other places, and we are keen to learn more about that huge investment in time and loving

energy through our newsletters, and our website:
<https://www.theorderofaustralja.asn.au/nsw/news>

Louise Davis AM, Communications & Community Liaison NSW Branch.

NSW BRANCH FIRST NETWORKING FORUM

The first Order of Australia Association NSW Networking Forum for 2020, held on 7th March at Sydney Hospital, was a great success with over 70 members and guests attending.

Events manager, A/Prof John Gullotta AM, welcomed guests and introduced the guest speakers:

Gemma Sisia AM, in 1993 as a 22 year old newly qualified teacher from Armidale in regional NSW, travelled to Uganda to teach in an under-resourced girls' school. She grew up on a sheep and wool property, the only daughter among 8 children.

Gemma spoke about **Fighting Poverty through Education - Making dreams reality !**

On a safari trip to Tanzania Gemma could see an opportunity to really make a difference in the community of Arusha, and so she put her dream into reality. She worked with local community leaders and together they built a free public school which expanded to 3 schools with two boarding campuses, with close to 2,000 students, including 1400 boarders. They named it The School of St Jude, opening the gates on January 29, 2002. With the support of generous volunteers, donors and Rotarians, united by a shared goal, they have provided some of the brightest, poorest students in Tanzania with access to a free, high quality education.

The School of St Jude also now owns and maintains 25 buses which transport students and staff safely to and from school, provides 29,000 hot meals each week and employs over 290 people – more than 95% of whom are Tanzanian.

In 2007 Gemma's achievements were honoured by being made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) "for service to the international community through the establishment and development of The School of St Jude in Arusha, Tanzania."

Her story has been featured twice in the ABC TV documentary program Australian Story, in 2005 with a follow-up in 2009.

In 2012 Gemma was named one of The Australian Financial Review and Westpac's 100 Women of Influence, nominated in the Global category and was also a finalist in New South Wales for the Australian of the Year Awards.

Our second speaker was **Judith Makange**, who studied at St Jude's for 13 years and, thanks to her 100% free, quality education, life for Judith and her family is becoming easier.

We also welcomed Maddie Kelly, Alumni Coordinator at the School of St Jude's.

From the early days of just three students, St Jude's are now able to support 1,800 students and over 350 graduates as part of their Beyond St Jude's Program. Between them, they have taught over 60,000 government school students as part of a Community Service Year before going on to tertiary education. In January 2020, a girls' secondary school was opened. Girls from a poor, rural background are the least likely to complete their schooling and yet having educated girls is one of the surest ways to break the cycle of poverty. It's an important next step which we will look forward to hearing more about in the future.

Judith, an aspiring Agribusiness mogul who joined Gemma in Australia during The School of St Jude's 2020 promotional tour studied at St Jude's for 13 years and, thanks to her 100% free, quality education, life for Judith and her family is becoming easier.

Judith is the youngest child in her family and has three siblings. Judith's mother, Esther, did not finish her schooling. She worked as a maid, but did not earn enough money to provide basic necessities for her children. The house was ill equipped and Judith often went hungry.

In 2006, equipped with little more than hope for a brighter tomorrow, Esther brought Judith to St Jude's Student Selection Day. Judith was one of several thousand promising students who sat our academic tests that year, earning high enough results to progress to the poverty assessment stage of Student Selection.

When St Jude's staff visited Judith's one-room, cement block home, they immediately knew she was deserving of an academic scholarship.

Judith started at St Jude's in 2007, as a brand new Standard 1 student, eager to put pen to paper and write the future of her dreams. Being selected to attend St Jude's was a golden chance for Judith to help her family. Thanks to her education they were able to move into a two-room house and also purchase some electrical appliances, including a small refrigerator. Judith has now started her Beyond St Jude's Tertiary Scholarship, studying Agribusiness. Agriculture is the largest industry in Tanzania. Judith is already well on her way to success. Since graduating from St Jude's in May 2019, she's participated in the Beyond St Jude's Community Service Year, teaching biology in an under-resourced government school near Arusha. The school has approximately 900 students and only two biology teachers.

After these amazing and powerful insights into life in Tanzania, our guest speakers were thanked by our

Hon Secretary, Martha Jabour OAM who gave a moving speech and announced that the proceeds of the Forum would be donated to the School of St Jude to provide teaching equipment and books to assist future students.

A/Prof John Gullotta AM
Events & Public Relations NSW Branch

THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA HUNTER REGIONAL GROUP

The Hunter Regional Group enjoyed a luncheon at the Cardiff RSL Club on Saturday 22nd February 2020 to welcome the OA Australia Day recipients of the Region.

June Cameron AM hosted the day and extended special congratulations to all of the new recipients and a warm welcome to those in attendance at the luncheon.

Five of the twelve local recipients were able to attend the luncheon with family and friends – Thomas Boulton AM, John Cootes OAM, Gionni Di Gravio OAM, Kay Lane OAM, John Land OAM.

Ron Sharpe OAM, the New South Wales Branch Regional Coordinator attended the luncheon. He advised those present of current happenings at the National and State levels and proposed a toast to the Order of Australia.

The special guest speaker on the day was Professor Alex Zelinsky AO FAA FIEEE, Vice Chancellor and President of the University of Newcastle. He delivered an extremely interesting insight into his background and the education system with special emphasis on the University of Newcastle.

Fellowship and a wonderful lunch were enjoyed by all in attendance.

The venue was comfortably full with 137 members and guests in attendance.

Future activities planned by the Order of Australia Hunter Regional Group are Morning Teas at Port Stephens on Wednesday 17 June 2020 and Wallsend Diggers on Wednesday 15th July 2020 (subject to the corona virus situation at the time).

Charles Stevens OAM RFD ED



PHOTO. Standing – John Cootes OAM | John Land OAM | Gionni DiGravio OAM | Michael Green OAM | Jack McNaughton OAM

Sitting – Alex Zelinsky AO FAA FIEEE | Kay Lane OAM | Thomas Boulton AM |

Photo – Bill Hanley OAM

Tasmania Branch

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Branch Annual General Meeting was held in February at Campbell Town in the State's northern midlands, an area renowned for fine wool growing and farming generally. We are pleased to welcome two new members to Branch Committee, Gary Carr OAM and David Brill AM. Gary has a background with Sleep Disorders Australia at Board level and as the National Marketing Director being made a Life Member in 2014. He has also been involved with AFL Tasmania as Promotions Officer and with the Northern Tasmanian Football League at various levels including a period as General Manager. David is a world-renowned film and video journalist, having worked on various television programs including SBS Dateline and ABC Four Corners. He has covered numerous wars, conflicts, natural and man-made disasters and humanitarian events for over 45 years.

We will miss the valued contributions of retiring members, Thérèse von Samorzewski OAM and Sue Shea OAM both of whom have made significant contributions for the benefit of the Branch committee and the Tasmanian OAA community. Fortunately, both will continue with the Northern Regional committee.

Thirty-two Tasmanians were honoured in the 2020 Australia Day honours list. We congratulate all these worthy recipients for their significant contributions to our society. The list of these recipients is elsewhere in this magazine.

The last function I was able to attend prior to the closure of life as we knew it was an excellent luncheon organised by our North-West Regional Group held at the Emu Bay Rhododendron Gardens at Burnie. My wife Jenny and I travelled from Hobart there and back on a truly glorious fine day made all the more enjoyable by the new green growth showing though in the countryside after months of drought and the sight of four wedge-tailed eagles soaring on the thermals and a sparkling Bass Strait all added to the pleasure. Green though it may be, there are still many areas particularly in our south-east desperately in need of good soaking rain. Oddly, since writing this, significant rain has now been received in our parched south-east that will go a long way towards breaking the drought.

The well attended luncheon was a great gathering on our North-Western members with about 120 attending. Our Branch Patron Her Excellency the Hon. Kate Warner AC and her husband Mr Richard Warner AM attended and presented Mr Betty Hite OAM with a plaque recognising her long-standing and valuable contribution over many years to the Association at Branch and Regional level. Mr Warner was also congratulated for his Australia Day award on an AM.

The "About Us" page on the Tasmanian section of the Association website starts with the statement that "The inaugural meeting of the Tasmanian Branch was held in the Hobart Town Hall on 11th December 1980."

The inaugural meeting of the Tasmanian Branch was held in the Town Hall in Hobart and was attended by 23 recipients of the Order of Australia where the convenor Mr Douglas A

Cashion AO welcomed the attendees and stated that the meeting was called to consider the formation of a Tasmanian Branch of the Order of Australia Association.

It is worth quoting directly from the minutes of that meeting that in part note:

"The Chairman called on Mr T [Tom] D Room [AM] to give a brief resumé of the activities of the Association to date and setting out the present position of the National Association and of the State Branches that have already been formed. He stated that all other States and Territories had already had their meetings to form their respective branches as early as possible. He stated that there were 46 members present in Tasmania who had already joined the National Association and it was most desirous that the Tasmanian Branch should be formed immediately. He stated that a cheque for \$250 had been received from the National Association to cover expenses of the branch. He stated that the next meeting of the National Association would be held in Canberra on the 24th January 1981 and the branch would be formed in Tasmania and 6 representatives from the branch to be nominated as members of the National Executive Committee."

The meeting agreed to having a committee of eight persons, four from the South and two each from the North and North-West. Those elected were Mr Douglas A Cashion AO, Mrs Phyllis Benjamin AO MBE, Mr Max A Jillett AO and Mr E Linlay Harris OAM from the South. The election of representatives from the North and North-West was left in the hands of the Provisional Committee.

An annual dinner was organised and it was suggested that a small function be arranged to welcome new awardees.

To celebrate 40 years of existence of the Tasmanian Branch members are invited to suggest an appropriate way in which to mark this point in our history, assuming of course that the current COVID-19 restrictions are well past us.

Alastair Douglas OAM
Tasmanian Branch Chairman

GOVERNOR PRESENTS MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD AT N.W. TASMANIA GROUP LUNCH.

Her Excellency Professor, the Honourable Kate Warner AC, Governor of Tasmania together with her husband Mr Richard Warner AM were the Guests of Honour at a Lunch hosted by the NW Region of the Tasmania Branch of the Order at the Emu Valley Rhododendron Gardens, near Burnie, Tasmania in mid-March. The luncheon was attended by approx. 70 members and guests.

The Governor and Mr Warner were met by NW Region Chairman, Dr Peter Holm OAM and the Members of the NW Group Committee, together with the Tasmania Branch Chairman, Mr Alastair Douglas OAM and his wife Jenny; and the Northern Region Chairman, Dr Nicholas Chantler AM and his wife Tanya.

After the Official Welcome and introductions, Toasts to the Queen and to the Order, lunch was served. The reception room was beautifully prepared and decorated with flowers and

foliage from the Garden and everyone was clearly in a mood to enjoy themselves, including our Distinguished Guests. Indeed, it was to be almost the last official engagement the Governor will be attending, due to the current health situation.

After main course, the Governor was invited to give a brief address which focused on one of the great contributors to both the Order and the local community, Mrs Betty Hite OAM.

Betty received her OAM on 11th June 2001 for services to the communities of Burnie and Wynyard, which focused on helping the elderly and less fortunate by engaging the local population to engage in money raising activities for many years, which continued until very recently. She has held many positions on both the Tasmania Branch Executive and to the NW Region Committee and given enormous service over very many years. Betty was also one of the founders of the Wynyard Foreshore Market, and played a major part in the organisation of the Umina Park Home for the Aged Annual -Village Green Fair for over twenty years. In this latter role she would gather up all the soft toys that had been donated for sale and take them home for a “dip” in her washing machine (You never know where they have been!). From there they were hung on her washing line to dry, by their tails, legs or whatever appendage may be long enough and convenient! In time this became quite a feature of the area.

At the end of her address the Governor presented Betty with a Wooden Plaque featuring The Order of Australia Association emblem and an inscription recognising her Meritorious Service to the Association and the Community. She was totally surprised by the whole proceedings and clearly very proud. Well done Betty.

On behalf of the NW Region, the Governor then presented Betty with a soft stuffed pink rabbit as a memento of the occasion, with the observations that it may need the occasional wash, but would cost nothing to feed and incur no veterinary fees!!

Betty was thrilled, and waving her finger at the NW Region Chairman (a retired Veterinary Surgeon), playfully said, “It would be pistols at dawn tomorrow”!!

A presentation was then made to the Governor by the Board Chairman of the Emu Valley Rhododendron Gardens, Mr Ant Dry, as the Governor is Patron of the Gardens, as well as the Tasmania Branch of the Association. After lunch some photographs were taken to mark the occasion and the Governor and Mr Warner took a brief tour of the Gardens prior to departing.

The Tasmanian Branch and the NW Region of the Association were delighted with the excellent service and the enthusiastic support given by the Gardens and their wonderful volunteers for this special occasion. Very many thanks to you all.



Her Excellency Professor, the Honourable Kate Warner AC, Governor of Tasmania with Mrs Betty Hite OAM

JOCELYN YVONNE WATSON OAM

Jocelyn received an OAM in the Australia Day Honours 2020 “*for service to the community of Launceston*”. She has lived in Launceston since 1963 after marrying Tasmanian, John Watson AM, (who was a Senator for Tasmania for 30 years). She has recently retired as a Justice of the Peace after over 25 years’ service.

Born in Horsham, Victoria, Jocelyn has three younger brothers. As both her parents were teachers, Jocelyn moved many times with her family. In 1960, she graduated as a pharmacist in Victoria, studying whilst also working full-time in pharmacy.

Jocelyn is a Life Member of the PSA (Pharmaceutical Society of Australia) with 50 years of service. She worked in multiple pharmacies in Launceston as a locum pharmacist, whilst also raising four children.

Jocelyn is a Life Member of the United Friendly Society following extensive work in their pharmacy and as a Director for over nine years. Whilst a Director, Jocelyn initiated the provision of an annual nursing scholarship for students at the University’s Newnham campus. She was an Inspector for the Pharmacy Board of Tasmania 1999-2005, and was made a Fellow of Australian College of Pharmacy Practice in 1993. It has been interesting to see and be a part of the changes in pharmacy over this time.

With a keen interest in gardening, Jocelyn has been a member of the Launceston Horticultural Society for over 40 years, including treasurer for three years. She loves sharing her flowers with others.

Church work, as an Elder and Chair of the Elders Council at East Launceston Uniting Church, and now on the Pastoral Care group at Pilgrim Uniting Church, continues. A change of occupation serving as a volunteer at Pilgrim’s Maggies Café, was fun, meeting new people and offering good food, but she leaves the coffee making to others!

The Royal Commonwealth Society continues to uphold the monarchy. Jocelyn has been a member since 1987, was Vice-President in 2012 for two years and recently retired as a council member. Through this organisation many friends have been made.

It is clear that Jocelyn Watson OAM has been a highly valued member of her chosen profession and to her community.

Northern Region Notes

There was a good attendance at the Northern Region Annual General Meeting held at Glenara Lakes Youngtown on February 6th 2020. The Branch chairman Alastair Douglas OAM thanked retiring and appointed office bearers for their work and contributions. The creation of an important new position of membership officer for the region was accepted by Jenny Fraser OAM – thanks

Jenny.

Elected Office bearers:

Chair Dr Nicholas Chantler AM PhD,

Deputy Chair Dr Frank Madill AM

Treasurer Sue Shea OAM,

Secretary Thérèse von Samorzewski OAM

Committee members - Clive Lee AM ASM

John Osborne OAM, Jenny Fraser OAM, Gary Carr OAM and Dr George Merridew AM.



Members attending AGM – branch chairman Alastair Douglas OAM end seat.

We are delighted to welcome three new members to the Association, Mrs Jocelyn Watson OAM, Ms Constance Seagram AM (HP) and Dr John Wettenhall OAM.



Doctor Frank Madill AM director and Mrs Linda Madill OAM

New multifunction community centre at Campbelltown

Northern regional members contributed to the strong turnout at the branch AGM held at the Campbelltown War Memorial Oval precinct on Sunday 16th February. A big thank you to Mrs Laura Double OAM for providing a delicious luncheon. The precinct had just completed a new multifunction centre at a cost of \$2.8 million and we were fortunate to be one of the first organisations hold a meeting and meal in the new surroundings.



Part of the new Campbelltown War Memorial Oval precinct buildings

The new complex features change rooms, clubrooms, meeting room, commercial kitchen and function space. It also includes the Campbelltown swimming pool, tennis courts and recreation ground. It is adjacent to the Midland Highway and will be a great boon to the local district as well as a potential central meeting place for organisations like the order of Australia Association who have branches in each of the three regions of Tasmania.

NATIONAL NEWS

NATIONAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The necessary restrictions imposed by the advent of COVID-19 have been wide-ranging and have affected us all in many ways. Our inability to meet for Branch activities has also meant that in most Branches we have been unable to welcome new recipients of an award in the normal way. To the great credit of Branches alternative means of maintaining contact have been developed

The regrettable cancellation of the planned National Conference in Darwin from 7th to 10th May meant that we were unable to hold our Annual General Meeting on Saturday 9th May. The same spirit of innovation that has maintained Branch activity was extended to holding our AGM by internet-based videoconference. Inviting all 8,000 members to attend was clearly impractical and another form of participation was required. This was achieved by encouraging all members to 'have their say' by appointing a proxy with the option of directing the way in which their vote should be directed.

The AGM videoconference was chaired by our National President, Heather Ridout AO and was attended by directors and Branch chairmen as well as our auditor. The pleasing financial results of 2019 were presented, and some forecasts made of the way ahead. The meeting noted the appointment of the following to the Executive Committee:

National Chairman	Barry Nunn AO RFD ED (second year of term)
National Deputy Chairman	John Archer OAM
National Treasurer	Muriel Barasso OAM
National Membership Director	Helene Bender OAM

It was noted that there had been no nomination for the position of National Secretary following the decision of the incumbent, Phil Morrall AM CSC not to continue in the role. Phil has provided three years of dedicated effort to the role and will be missed.

NATIONAL BOARD MEETING 6TH TO 8TH MAY

The challenge of holding a national Board meeting from widely dispersed locations was considerable but was successfully managed. This was achieved by the wonders of videoconferencing and by holding the meeting in stages over 3 days. Significant matters discussed included:

- The appointment of John Archer OAM as Interim National Secretary in addition to his role as National Deputy Chairman
- The adoption of a revised budget for 2020 taking account of the impact of COVID-19 on all aspects of Association activity
- Proposals for enhanced communication with members
- Support for plans to hold the 2021 National Conference in Darwin if restrictions are sufficiently eased

- The continued development of the new Association Constitution and associated Bylaws
- Review of Policy management and development
- Plans for future Board meeting

THE WAY AHEAD

The impact of COVID-19 on all aspects of the Australian way of life has been something not experienced since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Our Association has been affected, but our difficulties have been minor compared with those of many of our countrymen and business operators.

Our Association Branches have taken up the challenge of maintaining cohesion within our membership by extensive use of email newsletters, phone calls, videoconferencing, and other means. Our next task will be to emerge from the restrictions on our activities with enthusiasm tinged with caution.

We need keep in mind that many of us are in the more senior age bracket and thus may have heightened vulnerability to COVID-19. The Audit & Risk Committee of your National Board have taken on the urgent task of providing guidance to Branches and members in their reestablishment of personal contact. This guidance will of course be in accord with Federal and State requirements.

COVID-19 has severely restricted our ability to welcome new recipients announced in the 2020 Australia Day Honours, and may also carry over to the 2020 Queen's Birthday Honours. As restriction are lifted it will be important to reach out, offer fellowship and encourage them to join our Association. It will be important to remember that the virus is likely to be with us for some time and caution will be required to achieve a balanced approach to Association activity.

Stay well, stay safe and stay in touch

Barry Nunn AO
National Chairman

Draft OAA Constitution

The new draft Constitution represents a key first stage in an overall 'governance' project to be accompanied by the completion of a revised set of bylaws and continued policy development. The draft Constitution has been developed with guidance from the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC), our corporate regulator, and with input from Branch Committees and those with constitutional expertise. The template for not-for-profit (NFP) organisations has been adopted as the model for our Constitution.

It is intended that members be asked to adopt the new Constitution, after a period of consultation, at the National AGM in May 2021. A favourable vote by 75% of the members is required to adopt the new Constitution.

A draft of the new OAA Constitution is now available to members. This draft can be accessed on the OAA's website at:

<https://www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/national/news-events/>

If you have any points you wish to clarify or discuss please contact your Branch Nominated Director in writing or by email. (Their contact details can be found on the first page of *The Order* magazine.)

For those who wish to read the draft Constitution but do not have an email address, please request a hard copy from your Branch or Regional Group by contacting your Branch Nominated Director or Regional Group Chairman /Co-ordinator.

Some proposed changes

Purpose of our Association

The 'statement of purpose' in our Constitution has been reworded to provide a clear and simple expression of why we exist and what we do. This is an essential part of ensuring that we are focussed on the appropriate goals and that we attract and retain members

Election to the Board

The ACNC favours, but does not mandate, the election of board members by the membership of the organisation. Since our formation, nomination of Branch Directors to the Association National Board has been by Branch Committees, and the appointment of the Executive (Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and Membership Director) by the Board itself.

Our new Constitution will provide for the election of Branch Directors by the members of that Branch and the election of the Executive Directors by the eight Branch Directors.

Tenure of Directors

At present directors are appointed to the National Board for one year and may stand for re-appointment. The ACNC is aware of the potential loss of experience in short board tenure. It recommends that board members should be appointed for a longer period, typically 3 years, with the opportunity to stand for re-appointment for a total of 9 years' service. Our Constitution is to adopt this recommendation.

Robin Watts AM
Convenor, Constitution Working Party

FOUNDATION NEWS – NEW SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholarships

The Board of Directors of the Order of Australia Association Foundation endorsed the recommendations of the National Selection Panel to award Scholarships to Charles Darwin University student Shanae Kuo and The University of Adelaide student Nicholas Simm.

This generous Scholarship provides for financial support of \$40,000 and an introduction to a eminent volunteer mentor, who is a recipient of an Order of Australia award in the field of interest of the student. Selection is made from:

- *young Australian citizens undertaking a full-time undergraduate Degree
- *high academic results
- *involvement in community affairs who exhibit potential as future leaders and
- *demonstration of financial need.

With the current lock-down situation in Australia, due to the coronavirus, the prestigious award ceremony which occurs at the Order of Australia Association Annual Conference Dinner cannot be held this year. Alternative arrangements are being planned.

The Scholarship Awards rely entirely on donations from members of the Association and the public. Donations of \$45,000 include naming rights. Smaller amounts are aggregated to fund an Award. All donations are tax-free. To date, forty-three Scholarships have been awarded to University students from all States and Territories – twenty-two to men and twenty-one to women.

Mentors play a very important role by volunteering their expertise, advice and understanding of the fields of study and career paths.

For further information please contact Associate Professor Elaine M Murphy AM PhD.. mobile 0410 642 341 em2b@activ8.net.au

SHANAE KUO

Twenty-year-old Shanae is studying for a Bachelor of Secondary Education at Charles Darwin University, Casuarina Campus, as a full-time student. She has spent all her life in the Northern Territory. She has a passion for effecting change, supporting causes, enhancing learning, and displays understanding and empathy beyond her years.

Her academic results, for the first two years have been outstanding, in spite of her need to work part-time to support her studies. Her drive to embrace a teaching career is based on some excellent role models from her school years and *“I felt I could approach hard concepts from different angles and that allowed me to teach others the learning to suit their needs”*.

She has chosen to contribute to a wide variety of community projects based on her love of science, the environment, music, welfare problem solving and considerable concern for support of rural and remote people. She has researched husbandry requirements for the Northern Australian Chameleon Shrimp; established music programs for young musicians to busk, play, plan and perform for audiences; examined indigenous education models which

culminated in an Indigenous Perspectives Mind Map; and participated in nation-wide problem solving expos. Shanae has produced her own free community event in support of young musicians and animal welfare charities. Last year she was invited to Sydney, NSW, to share her community leadership ideas at the DIGI Engage forum, an initiative of the Australian Government and the non-profit advocacy group of the digital industry worldwide. The forum provides a base for young people to explore identity, diversity and leadership.

Shanae is also a mentor with the Beacon Foundation's My Road program which allows young Australian's the opportunity to connect with industry role models at no cost. The program also uses video platforms to reach young people in rural, regional and remote areas. A deep-seated love for animals, both domestic and wild life, has grown through her involvement in work placements in animal hospitals and a tourist crocodile attraction. She has also completed placements within various Government Departments and has strong references from Territory Families' Youth Justice personnel and Youth Outreach and Re-engagement Team members.

This motivated, responsible, efficient person is adept in both team and individual situations. Her credo is *"I am always wanting to change myself to improve and this is essential within the field of teaching"*. A most worthy recruit for NT education!

Donor: The Order of Australia Association

NICHOLAS SIMM

Twenty-three-year-old Nicholas has completed a Bachelor of Economics and Bachelor of International Studies and is now enrolled in a Master of Commerce by coursework and a Diploma of Languages (German), at The University of Adelaide. He has maintained excellent results throughout his studies. In relation to a career path he admits *"I have a passion to solve financial problems and to help others reach their financial goals by generating real income by assembling a wealth accumulation strategy"*. He is conscious of the changing needs of clients as work and family situations change. Alternatively, he is also fascinated by accounting *"as it involves working with a strict set of rules and numbers which is my natural talent"*. To this end he has enrolled in a Master of Commerce Degree this year in order to choose a combination of accounting and finance subjects to clarify his real interests. He is keen to seek the advice of his mentor to help outline effective career paths.

At University Nicholas has volunteered with Student Health and Wellbeing. He leads a team of five other volunteers to help promote resources to assist new students adapt to University life and also life as a young adult. Within the University Volleyball Club he attracts new players by linking with schools in the area, to assist in a smooth transition to playing when they enter University. He is Head Coach of the beginners Volleyball with the aim of teaching basic skills, developing fitness training regimes and generating a keen sense of team identity. The University has acknowledged his efforts with several certificates for special service awards.

Outside of University Nicholas is Treasurer of the Australian Fairy Tale Society in New South Wales. He responded to an advertisement for someone to compile their monthly financial statements and produce the Annual Financial Reports. In 2018 Nicholas undertook a Parliamentary Internship to determine export strategies for South Australia, reporting to the

Office of Premier Steven Marshall. A second internship, in 2019, was with the American Chamber of Commerce to investigate the state of trade and investment between the United States and South Australia.

In all, Nicholas Simm displays a supportive, caring attitude and an ability to meet and inspire others. He is aware of 'the big picture' and mindful of comprehensive ways in which to pursue his passions. He will effect change, thrive on multiple challenges and display thorough analytical technical skills.

Donor: **Mr Ross Adler AC**

Queensland Branch

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - Dr Gary Bacon. AM. BSc (Hons). PhD. FIFA.

Hearty Greetings are forwarded to all members.

At the recent February AGM there was a significant transfer of batons within the Queensland Committee. We said goodbye to several stalwarts who collectively have given over 35 years of meritorious service to the Queensland Branch, namely Associate Professor John Harden AM, Emeritus Professor Mary Mahoney AO, Geoff Cowles OAM, Pat Galligan OAM, Royce Voss OAM and Ray Young OAM. Due acknowledgement was made of the substantial array of Branch organised events for the prior year, successfully completed and reported upon. It was my privilege to welcome onto the 2020 team two new members, Ross Patching OAM as Secretary and Kathy Wooldridge OAM as a Committee member.

At our initial March meeting other changes in office positions were affected and these are listed adjacent. Position Descriptions for all positions have been compiled together with a short bio for all Branch Committee members. A communique was broad cast to all State members introducing the Branch Committee and Regional Co-ordinators and recognising a Duty of Care, enclosing a health message to deal with the COVID-19 crisis.

Sadly, with the closure of Government House and introduction of necessary Governmental restrictions on personal interfacing, all our planned Branch activities for 2020 have been cancelled for the indeterminate future.

I would like to include some of the highlights from the Queensland Branch 2019 Annual Report. It was another busy year with a great variety of events organized by a hard-working Branch committee as well as many worthy functions organized by our regional groups throughout the State.

An annual highlight of the Queensland Branch calendar is its two outstanding celebratory lunch events to welcome new award recipients. These were held in May for new Australia Day awardees in and October for Queen's Birthday awardees. There was a record number of 268 Queensland recipients who received awards in the Order of Australia in 2019 and 118 of these are now members of The Order of Australia Association. This represents 41% of the total number of Queensland recipients joining the Association compared with 36.6% last year (68 of 186 recipients joining), a pleasing 4.4% increase in membership uptake.

Branch morning events in the Brisbane area were also held at historic Hanworth House in East Brisbane in July and the Centre for Hypersonics at The University of Queensland at St Lucia in November.

The Secondary Schools Citizenship Awards (SSCAs) and the Senior Volunteer Awards were maintained in 2019. It was pleasing that His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC,

the Governor of Queensland accepted our invitation to present the SSCAs to the winning students at Parliament House on 20 September: the fourth occasion that he has done so.

Another important event in the 2019 calendar was the Black-Tie Queen's Birthday Dinner co-hosted by the Association and the Victoria League Brisbane for Commonwealth Friendship (VLB) at the Tattersall's Club in Brisbane on Saturday 11 June 2019. Added to the calendar was a novel Christmas event, also co-hosted with the VLB, in November, being the premiere of "Bring them Home" the Musical about the State of Origin, preceded by a cocktail reception, in the iconic, historic Princess Theatre at Woolloongabba.

Each Regional Group Convener organises at least one event during the year. This year there were fourteen events across the State. As most people are aware, Queensland is a large decentralised State and it is a credit to our Regional Conveners that they can organise well patronised events for members bearing in mind that for some members it is a whole day out due to distances travelled.

The full copy of the Annual Report is available from the Queensland Branch Secretary.

As caring individuals we are acutely aware that many of our fellow members scattered over Queensland, indeed Australia, are in an age profile that is deemed more susceptible to COVID-19 than other segments of the population. In these challenging times we all need to keep our spirits up and stay safe and healthy.

[Association members attend 2020 Commonwealth Day Multi Faith Service in Brisbane](#)

Commonwealth Day, held on the second Monday in March each year, is an opportunity for individuals, communities and organisations to promote the Commonwealth's shared values of peace, democracy and equality, and to celebrate the Commonwealth's rich diversity.

Approximately 20 members and guests from the Association joined with the Victoria League Brisbane for Commonwealth Friendship and other kindred organisations as well as members of the Brisbane public for an excellent Multi Faith Service in St John's Cathedral in Brisbane on Monday 9 March 2020.

The Service centred around the 2020 CHOGM theme of "*Delivering a Common Future: Connecting, Innovating, Transforming*" His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland and Mrs Kaye de Jersey were present and His Excellency delivered a moving address. Leaders of a number of religious faiths in Brisbane gave short addresses and the impressive, colourful program included some excellent performances from cultural groups including the Bhanga United Dancers –India and Ras Banamungu and the Det-n-ators International –Rwanda.

The Service was both moving and memorable and attracted quite a good attendance despite some of the heaviest rain we have had in Brisbane for sometime.



SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL GROUP

“BEING INFORMED OF THE ACTIVITIES OF BRIBIE ISLAND VOLUNTARY MARINE RESCUE”

On Wednesday 4 March members and guests from the Region gathered for their first function for 2020. The venue was The Serenity Restaurant at the Waterways on Bribie Island which overlooks the peaceful Pumicestone Passage and Glass House Mountains.

It was a joy to welcome members and guests, old and new and to note the friendly interaction before we all sat down to enjoy a delicious Morning Tea. (Our new Branch Chairman Dr Gary Bacon AM particularly enjoyed the scones with jam and cream). We were pleased to welcome and introduce to members our new Branch Committee members as well as two new recipients of The Order of Australia Award (Australian Day 2020). The new recipients were Kenneth

Howes OAM and Brian Taylor OAM. All eleven new recipients in the Region were invited, but only two were available to attend.

Following the Morning Tea our Guest Speaker Gary Voss gave a very informative, entertaining and comprehensive address about the Bribie Island Voluntary Marine Rescue (VMR) which also incorporated the VMR and Coast Guard on the Qld North Coast.

Gary is a rescue boat skipper and senior crew trainer for the Squadron is also involved in the development and delivery of maritime training to VMR Squadrons across Queensland, and regularly leads public safety awareness seminars both at VMR Bribie and in the community. With this background he was able to inform guests of the important and often dangerous roles that members of the VMR and Coast Guard undertake to protect the community. He also recounted some of the unusual rescues in which he had been involved which entertained but also amazed guests.

After answering various questions Gary was thanked for his address by Dr. Mick Davis AM ASM who presented him with a small gift and by Dr. Gary Bacon AM who presented him with a Certificate of Appreciation.

In all it was a most successful function where members and guests enjoyed fellowship, delicious food and an interesting and informative presentation by the Guest Speaker. Marjorie Voss OAM, Regional Convener presented Allan and Louise (Proprietors of Serenity Restaurant) with a Certificate of Appreciation for their continued excellent service to the Regional Group.

Unfortunately, the proposed function for early June has been cancelled because of the present situation with COVID-19.

NEWS FROM SUNNY NORTH QUEENSLAND

The Coronavirus Pandemic has forced the cancellation of the most recent function planned by the Townsville Regional Group, with a Luncheon at Seagulls Resort in the City in March failing to proceed.

While 35 members and partners had indicated that they would attend, the Townsville Group Committee felt that the overall age of participants would not be conducive to being part of such a function in the current circumstances.

The Luncheon followed on to the successful Annual Dinner held in October, 2019, although the many events and personal activities held at that time prevented a large number of award recipients from being able to attend.

In fact, at one stage, there were many more apologies for non-attendance than positive responses from those planning to attend.

However, more than 40 recipients and their partners from the Townsville Group area were able to attend the function at Seagulls Resort, where they enjoyed a two-course dinner and renewed acquaintances with those who were able to attend.

As part of the Group's policy of using its own members as guest speakers, the dinner was addressed by Dr Barry Hicks AM on his medical work over many years in Ethiopia, while former Queensland State Parliamentarian, Mark Stoneman AM, detailed his efforts in establishing the Cromarty Wetlands Project south of Townsville.

The Townsville Group Committee has a new member, following the decision by Judy Hunter OAM to stand aside because of her own busy calendar.

Judy played an important part in the resurrection of the Townsville Group and her positive input was appreciated by all other committee members during her time as a member.

Judy has been replaced by Tony Cadet-James OAM, who had offered his services to help organise local events.

He will join Group Convener, David Jackson OAM and Pauline Woodbridge OAM in ensuring the Townsville Group events continue into the future.

[Meet the 2019 Senior Volunteer Award winners](#)

The winners of the seventh annual Senior Volunteer Awards were announced at the Queensland Branch Annual Dinner on 24 February 2020. The Awards publicly recognise the vital contributions made to the organisation and operation of our society by senior volunteers. Michael Rayner AM from Blight Rayner Architects, the awards sponsor, presented the three winners with their awards.

The 2019 award winners are -

[Marion Emery - Yeronga, Brisbane](#)

Marion Emery has given years of voluntary service to Greenslopes Hospital, The National Heart Foundation and the Yeronga Community Centre. She volunteers every week at the Oncology Unit at the Greenslopes Private Hospital, assisting patients with meals, running errands for staff and bringing goodwill and cheer to many.

Marion's volunteering for the National Heart Foundation is linked with her work for the Yeronga Community Centre where she organises walking groups. Marion helps to improve the fitness of these individuals as well as providing social contacts for them through the walking groups.

Her nominator reports that as a Volunteer at the Yeronga Community Centre, Marion has always offered informal community support to individuals and families in need. In addition to preparing morning teas and cooking breakfasts on a weekly basis, Marion helps organise day trips and provides help outside the centre, such as helping to find accommodation for people.

She has been and remains an inspiration to generations of women as a thoughtful individual who throughout her life always looked out for others.

[Ken Mewburn - Caloundra, Sunshine Coast](#)

Ken is a long-standing multi-faceted volunteer with contributions to Golden Beach Progress Association, Caloundra Residents Association, Wildlife Qld, Sunshine Coast Environment Council, Bribie Island Environment Protection Association, Night Eyes Water and Land Care and Take Action for Pumicestone Passage.

Ken is also a musician, especially an organist, providing enjoyment to many. In his own time, he is a keen gardener.

His nominator reports that Ken's love of his volunteer work is reflected in the enthusiasm and knowledge he displays in his numerous presentations to schools and community groups.

He was the winner of the "Environmental Contributor of the Year" award in Caloundra in 2016 and a finalist in the Sunshine Coast Australia Day Senior Citizen of the Year in 2017 and 2019.

Ken is certainly a worthy recipient of a 2019 Senior Volunteer Award for his significant service as a volunteer in the community.

Joyce Ridgeway- Harristown, Toowoomba

Joyce has been an enthusiastic and committed musician volunteer for most of her life, contributing to the entertainment and enjoyment of many people.

Her work includes her involvement with the U3A group where Joyce conducts a "Sing-along" group. In all her activities she researches and prints sheet music for her participants at her own costs and helps those to read music where this skill is absent.

Of special note is Joyce's diligent work as Secretary of the National Seniors Garden City Branch. During her life she has served on many committees including one notable one for a woman in the "Vauxhall Owners' Club of Australia".

Joyce's nominator tells us that Joyce's impact on others through her joy of music has been invaluable. Many have commented that it has given them confidence in later life and a sense of purpose and community.

Joyce's contribution to the social welfare and enjoyment of the community has been extensive, valued and widespread.

She is a worthy recipient of a 2019 Senior Volunteer Award.



At the presentation of the 2019 Senior Volunteer Awards at the Annual Dinner on 24 February 2020 are from L-R Dr Gary Bacon AM, Branch Chairman; Marion Emery (awardee); Ken Mewburn (awardee); Joyce Ridgeway (awardee) and Michael Rayner AM from Blight Rayners, Architects (award sponsor).

NT BRANCH

How rare is an Order of Australia? - By Dr Tom Lewis OAM, Chairman NT Branch

The question came from the mouth of babes, and floored us. The talk was on an unrelated matter, but a recipient of the Order of Australia, Austin Asche, AC, QC, was presenting on his life: a rich tapestry of war service; legal work, and a stint as the Administrator of the Northern Territory.

“How rare is an Order of Australia?” was the question from a young member of the audience. Neither Austin, nor I, the organiser of the talk, knew the answer. But it’s a question that may well be asked, or has already been asked, of others. So here are some findings.

The database kept at *It’s an Honour* contains 40,219 recipients. Of those, 421 honorary recipients are listed. This therefore means there are 39,798 people definitively honoured.

The Order has been presented approximately 36,700 times since its inception in 1975. Of that, approximately 23,000 recipients are still alive. These approximates are for a number of reasons.

The first total is approximate because:

- The records are a little uncertain in pre-database days
- Some Australians have been awarded more than once
- Honorary recipients are not counted
- For reasons unknown, recipients in the military division were not counted.

The second “approximate” total – how many are still alive? – is not known, simply because deaths of recipients of the Order are not formally recorded. However Government House in Canberra does record the deaths of recipients in their database – but this is only if they are advised, or pick it up through the media or newspaper announcements.

The frequency of the bestowing of the Order has varied somewhat over the years. In the early years, prevalence of OA members honoured each year was between 0.001% and 0.003% (one in 100,000 to three in 100,000). Since about 1987 it has hovered around the 0.004% to 0.005% mark (one in 25,000 to one in 20,000), with a peak in the early 21st century around 0.006% (a bit more than 1 in 17,000). It is significant that the Bali Bombings, of 12 October 2002, saw many notable acts carried out by Australians both during and after the attack.¹ These were echoed later in awards both within and outside the Order of Australia.

So what to tell people who want brief immediate answers? Simply put, every year about one person in 20,000 receives an Order of Australia.

How many people in the population at present have an Order?

¹ The Bali Bombings saw 202 people killed, including 88 Australians.

At the time of writing, at the end of 2019, with a population of just over 25.5 million, 1/10th of one percent of the population have an Order of Australia, or expressed another way, “point 1 of 1 percent”.²

Expressed another way, one living person in 1,110 has an Order of Australia.

Notes:

The Bali Bombings saw 202 people killed, including 88 Australians.

¹ Based on a population of 25,551,407, as given by the Bureau of Statistics in their Population Clock at 13 December 2019. See Abs.gov.au. The answer was formulated by calculating 23,000 as a percentage of the population to get an answer of 0.0900146, which was then rounded up to .1.

Sources:

Bureau of Statistics. Abs.gov.au

Government House, Canberra. (Thanks especially to Ms Sharon Prendergast, and to Shane Stone AC QC)

It's An Honour website. <https://www.pmc.gov.au/government/its-honour>

-o-o-O-o-o-

² Based on a population of 25,551,407, as given by the Bureau of Statistics in their Population Clock at 13 December 2019. See Abs.gov.au. The answer was formulated by calculating 23,000 as a percentage of the population to get an answer of 0.0900146, which was then rounded up to .1.

VICTORIA BRANCH

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

In the February 2020 edition of *The Order* our thoughts were and still are with those impacted by the devastating bushfires.

Now we have COVID-19. Yes - "We are all in this together" and it is essential we all look after each other. Please respect and thank all the frontline workers during this challenging time. If VIC Branch members reading this article or a member you know needs assistance please contact me as VIC Chair on email chairvic@theorderofaustralia.asn.au or your Regional Group Chairman

To ensure we keep communicating with our members, our quarterly e-Newsletter is now monthly for the next few editions. Noting the e-Newsletter is only sent to members who have provided an email address; if you do not have your own email address, hopefully a family member or friend is happy to receive OAA information on your behalf. If they are, please email me their email address to be used allowing the Branch and National to communicate with you in a timely manner, and hopefully this will ensure members don't feel isolated.

Wednesday February 26 the fourth Inspiring Australians Oration was delivered by Kevin Sheedy AO at the Melbourne Town Hall. Please refer to the article regarding the Oration in this edition of *The Order*.

VIC Branch thanks the 2020 Australia Day Honours Recipients who have joined the Association; we also say thank you to the annual and three year members for their ongoing renewal and say hello to our Life Members.

Upcoming VIC Branch and Regional Group events have been postponed. The NGV reopening date has been put back to June 30; the Melbourne Winter Masterpieces French Impressionists Pierre Bonnard event has been postponed to 2023. Our Annual Lunch is scheduled for Tuesday November 17 at William Angliss Restaurant with guest speaker Dr Robert (Robbie) Gillies OAM. Co-Founder HoMie Street Store; Doctor at Alfred Health and Young Australian of the Year VIC 2016

Finally, before I sign off, I ask you to take care of yourself, your loved ones, those special to you and your community by following the advice of authorities during this challenging time in our history.

Helene Bender OAM
Branch Chairman

MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR of VICTORIA

We understand that you may be feeling less productive than usual, social distancing rules having temporarily closed down your programs or activities, or precluded your members from getting together as you normally would.

Naturally, our program here at Government House also has had to dramatically change, with the temporary cancellation of events and our visits across the State. But we have been implementing new ways to stay in touch with the community, particularly with those who might feel somewhat isolated right now.

One of these new initiatives is a program of letter writing, which aims, in a small way, to build greater community connection during these difficult times.

The Hon. Linda Dessau AC Anthony Howard AM QC

VICTORIA BRANCH INSPIRING AUSTRALIANS ORATION

Some of our 2020 Australia Day members attended the fourth VIC Branch Inspiring Australians Oration delivered by Kevin Sheedy AO at the Melbourne Town Hall to a full capacity of members, guests and students on Wednesday February 26, 2020.

Former VIC Branch Chairman David Mann AM was the MC, Deakin University Burwood Campus student Keenan Te sang the National Anthem then Helene Bender OAM VIC Branch Chair introduced Kevin Sheedy AO noting there is much more to Kevin than football.

Yes we acknowledge Kevin as a VFL/AFL player, coach and ambassador has had one of the most successful careers in Australian sporting history. He is a marketer, a thinker, an innovator, the holder of awards for community service and an inspirational speaker, capable of talking about topics way beyond the boundaries of sport. Kevin Sheedy is a man for all seasons, and for all reasons.

Kevin established AFL Sport Ready, a national not-for-profit company that has facilitated employment and education opportunities for more than 14,000 young Australians, including 2,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

2016 Kevin established a new initiative, the “Country Game” Round; Geelong v Essendon at the G noting people across regional Australia don't get enough recognition for their tireless work on the land. We should celebrate the history of agriculture and farming to Australia's economy, as well as the people who live and work in these regional towns.

He is the Ambassador for the Bravery Trust which provides financial support to veterans, current and former members of the Australian Defence Force, and their families, who have suffered injury or illness as a result of their service and are experiencing financial hardship. Kevin is equally inspirational beyond the boundaries of sport; he has a passion and commitment to the future of Australia, our youth and our culture.

A qualified plumber Kevin is an Australian Apprenticeships Ambassador for the Australian Government and Ambassador for the Patrick Cronin Foundation.

He is the author and co-author of numerous books and a man who appreciates the values he learnt from his parents.

Some of Kevin's Honours & Awards include 1998 Order of Australia, 2001 Centenary Medal, 2003 National Service Medal, and 2008 Australian Thinker of the Year.

Australia Day last year Kevin Sheedy was elevated to an Officer of the Order of Australia for his distinguished service to Australian Rules football as a senior coach, and to education and employment programs for young people.

Four years ago former VIC Branch Chairman Paul Wheelton AM initiated the Inspiring Australians Oration for our members and senior school students. Paul thanked our guest speaker who like himself has a passion and commitment to the future of Australia, our youth and our culture. He acknowledged Kevin's excellent address inspiring people of all ages with his lifelong learning.

Putting the dollars to one side, the success of the Order of Australia Association Foundation scholarships are the mentoring opportunities available to the scholarship recipients. The Hon Julia Gillard AC, 27th Prime Minister attended the Oration in her role as mentor of Hannah Gandy. Hannah was interviewed by our MC and spoke about her challenges as a student, how she turned her life around, her entry to university, helping other students, her community work and what her scholarship means to her. Both Chris Leptos AM the mentor of scholarship recipient and Jeremy Doupe who spoke at our annual lunch last November at William Angliss also attended the Oration. Both recipients greatly value the mentoring opportunities available.

Keenan Te returned to sing 'You're the Voice' before the formalities closed. Refreshments were served, then members their guests and students had the opportunity to talk with Kevin Sheedy AO, Julia Gillard AC, Hannah Gandy and Jeremy Doupe.

VIC Branch had merchandise for sale, we thank members for purchasing stock, and we acknowledge Gordon Bennett OAM the event photographer.

The success of an event like this requires good planning; we thank Peter Jones AM Chair of the OAA VIC Branch Events committee and one of his business employees Alex Day together with other committee members for their assistance in the lead up to and at the Oration to ensure the event was a success.

ORDER of AUSTRALIA AWARD - PERFECT TIME TO NOMINATE

With winter fast approaching please think outside the square and nominate those who have made a difference. Consider recognising outstanding service and exceptional achievement of citizens.

Yes, young achievers, diverse cultures and genders are out there in your community. All members of the VIC Branch committee are willing to assist you with the nomination process if required.

Further information is available at:-

It's An Honour: Dept of Prime Minister & Cabinet www.pmc.gov.au/government/its-honour

Australian Honours and Awards www.gg.gov.au/australian-honours-and-awards

The Order of Australia Association www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au

South Australia Branch

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The SA Branch report in this issue of "The Order" looks back on the successful activities up to the start of the COVID-19 disruption. The Branch has been pleased to be involved, through the Student Citizenship Awards, with several students who also received other civic awards.

We are also pleased to have re-started two of our regional groups that had not met for some time, and we hope to extend that process when the restrictions on social gatherings are once again more relaxed.

The cancellation of the National conference and all Branch activities for the remainder of the year has been disappointing but necessary.

I am hoping that we can run our New Recipients' Function towards the end of the year, as well as our Student Citizenship Awards, Friendship lunches, and Christmas morning tea, but these will depend on the progress of containing the COVID-19 virus.

I extend my best wishes to all of our members and recipients. As we recover from this crisis, both social and economic, there will be a lot of adjustment to our volunteer work, business structure, and charity involvement. We have all received recognition, through our award, for this work in the past. I am sure that we can all contribute in the future to the recovery of our chosen activity or past-time if we are able.

Keep Safe

Tony Metcalf OAM

Martin FitzPatrick OAM

Martin says he endured 'months of questioning' by a certain member of the SA Police Road Patrol who was a fellow Scout Leader at the 1st Reynella Scout Troop. He was awarded the OAM in the 2003 Australia Day Honours List – Martin says he then understood the reason for all the questions.

He received the insignia at Government House Adelaide on 8 April 2003. Martin had previously been made a Life Member of the Scouting Association in 1984, and was awarded the Silver Emu in 1998. In 2019 he celebrated 60 years as a Scout Leader: he received a Long Service Award with other Leaders on Sunday 13 October 2019 at Titanium Security Arena.

Martin came from a large family of five girls and three boys, living at Marino and later Seacliff. He trained with the Army Cadet and then the Sea Scouts (1st Brighton Sea Scouts, then 1st Holdfast Bay), which became a life-long involvement. His two older brothers were Sea Scouts Leaders at Brighton, and all school holidays became camping expeditions. Martin started by gaining his Wood Badge, then Rowing, Sailing & Power Charge Certificates, and he gained

First Aid certificates through St John Ambulance. His older brothers ran Brighton and Marino Sea Scout Troops for 17 years.

Martin went on to assist with rowing regattas and sailing races, as a starter, then judge and patrol boat examiner. He was promoted in 2016 to Assistant Branch Commissioner of Boating: as the trainer of all Scout and Cub Leaders, he has had the satisfaction of testing in the boat some 92 adults in rowing drills.

They attended jamborees and other events interstate, hosted international Scout members, took Scouts in wheelchairs camping. Martin ran the 1st Holdfast Bay Sea Scouts for 20 years, and the 1st Reynella Scout Troop for 22 years. He ran groups in Gladstone, Hamley Bridge and Flaxmill with his own two sons as members.

Outside of his volunteer activities, Martin worked in the clothing industry. He spent 10 years at the Scout Shop, and then in the optical industry for 34 years, retiring at the age of 70. Retirement saw him breeding disease-free pork: he is especially proud of the fact that he and his partner never lost a piglet. This is especially impressive considering one Sunday morning, no less than five large white sows all gave birth at the same time, to 17 each: this equalled 85 piglets. They all lived, although many required mouth-to-mouth. As Martin says, *"There was no-one else around, so you need to step up, pronto"*.

He has spent 15 years active with his local Neighbourhood Watch program. He notes that, at 80, he's the youngest in the group: *"the others are tiring and need youth to step up, sooner rather than later would be nice"*. He is also active with his local parish at Morphet Vale, but notes that they have a similar need – with age overtaking the members who are no longer able to fulfil the traditional roles, from Catechists and Eucharist Ministers to car-parking attendants.

Martin remains active as a boating trainer and assessor. He said, *"No doubt the powers that be feel I still have the skill and the knowledge to carry on; the next regatta may signal another story. Be Prepared said Baden-Powell"*.

VIRTUAL FELLOWSHIP

While the SA Branch Fellowship lunch meetings are unable to proceed in the current circumstances, the group has begun meeting 'virtually' using an online tool as their new 'venue' to keep members and guests involved and communicating.

The Fellowship program for SA Branch members is adhering to the dates, times and guest speakers previously advertised, but using a different format – the 'Zoom' online app.

The first 'virtual meeting' was held on 30 April. The inaugural speaker was Jan Forrest OAM, who spoke via 'Zoom' on her topic, *"Attracting Butterflies to your garden"*. Jan was joined by 21 online participants who were enthralled by her talk and PowerPoint presentation.

To participate in future online meetings, please contact Flavia de Pasquale OAM:

flaviadepasquale@yahoo.com.au

ACT NEWS for THE ORDER

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

So much has changed since our February edition of *The Order*: bushfires seem another world away, while “social distancing” is the new norm. What has not changed is the wonderful spirit of Australians, with driveway drinks, online dinner parties and dozens of other innovations helping somewhat to ease the pandemic response pain. And here in Canberra we have been blessed with record March rainfall and some very good early April soakings. In this edition you will find a report on our 2020 Order of Australia Association – Australian National University Lecture, which was delivered on Wednesday 4 March by Admiral Chris Barrie AC (Retd). You’ll also read about the presentation of our final 2019 Student Citizenship Award. And we’ve taken the opportunity to introduce our new Branch Nominated Director, Dr Alan Morrison AM.

At the time of writing, all Association events remain in abeyance. This of course includes the National Conference, and with Darwin 2020 now deferred indefinitely, the earliest that the planned Canberra 2021 Conference could now be held is 2022. The Branch Committee will continue to meet using the technology that is now available to us, and we’ll keep members posted as the situation unfolds. In the meantime, any Branch member who needs a hand with something is very welcome to contact me or any other member of the Committee.

Warm regards,

Michael Crane DSC & Bar, AM
Branch Chairman

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & GUEST SPEAKER

The ACT Branch Annual General Meeting was held on 19 February 2020 at the Royal Canberra Golf Club.

The election of officers resulted in welcoming Lynne Duckham OAM and Andrew Phelan AM as new members for the Branch Committee.

In accordance with Association rules, Dr Alan Morrison AM was appointed the ACT Branch Nominated Director at the Branch Committee meeting of 18 March following the Annual General Meeting.

Immediately following the AGM, Branch member Professor Jane Dahlstrom OAM spoke about her journey as a pathologist. She underlined the importance of pathology as a discipline and sketched some of the changes she has helped make to the profession in Canberra and internationally. She also touched on the importance of Canberra’s Peter Herdson pathology teaching museum, and illustrated using several specimens from the museum which she had brought along. Members enjoyed the presentation and the following Q & A session. Jane was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in June 2019 *for service to medical education and to pathology*.



Professor Jane Dahlstrom OAM with specimens from the Peter Herdson Museum

ACT BRANCH NOMINATED DIRECTOR – DR ALAN MORRISON AM

Dr Alan Morrison AM is the new ACT Branch Nominated Director for the OAA National Board. Alan was previously a member of the ACT Branch committee and has a wealth of experience in Corporate Governance, Business Planning, Government, and Business Development. His roles have included senior positions in ACTEW Corporation, including as Deputy Chairman and Managing Director of ACTEW Energy Ltd, and 12 years on the Board of Standards Australia, the last 4 years as Chairman.

In 2008, Dr Morrison was elected as President of the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). He was the first Australian ever to fill this highly influential and globally significant role. In 2009 and 2010 he was nominated as one of the top one hundred Influential Engineers in Australia by IE (Aust). Alan is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has served as a JP since 1984, firstly in NSW and in the ACT from 1990. On Australia Day 2018 Alan was appointed a Member in the Order of Australia *for significant service to the community through development and support for International Standards, to the Energy Supply Sector, and to Engineering.*

OAA-ANU LECTURE – ADMIRAL CHRIS BARRIE AC (RETD) - WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH

Members ventured out on a rainy night to attend our annual ANU lecture **delivered by** Admiral Chris Barrie AC (Retd) on the subject **“It’s an Honour - Reflections”**.

Admiral Barrie challenged the audience to think critically about the design and execution of our honours and awards system to ensure that it is inclusive and free of the perception of bias. He pointed to the role that the Association has in this important task. As a former Chief of Defence Force, Admiral Barrie had the opportunity to recommend many people for an

Australian honour, and to participate for four years in the selection process. Admiral Barrie was appointed a Member in the Order of Australia in 1994 *in recognition of service to the Royal Australian Navy, particularly as Deputy Maritime Commander and Chief of Staff, Maritime Headquarters*. He was appointed an Officer in the Order in 1998 *for distinguished service to the Australian Defence Force as Deputy Chief of Naval Staff and Vice Chief of the Defence Force* and appointed a Companion in the Order in 2001 *for eminent service to the Australian Defence Force as Chief of the Defence Force*.

The ACT Branch appreciates the continuing support for the OAA-ANU lecture by ANU Vice-Chancellor Professor Brian Schmidt AC.

2019 ACT BRANCH STUDENT AWARDS

Samuel Freeman (Year 11 - Canberra Grammar School)

The final presentation of the 2019 ACT Branch Student Awards was made to Samuel Freeman before his peers at a full Canberra Grammar School assembly on 26 February 2020.

For his sustained, dedicated community work Sam was presented with the ACT Branch student award of the Medallion for Outstanding Community Service and Citizenship and a School Plaque.

Samuel has an extensive and diverse history of volunteering and community service which commenced when he was just four years old. His volunteering service has supported organisations such as Legacy and the Salvation Army. Samuel's generosity has been recognised by Lions and Fred Hollows awards, two ACT Children's Week awards and becoming a 2019 finalist in the NSW/ ACT Young Achiever Awards. In addition, he has earned several school awards for exemplary community service and volunteering commitment at his school.

As a keen sportsman, Sam has given many hours to teaching skills in Taekwondo and yachting to students of all ages.

The Student Awards were managed by Dr Bill Maiden PSM OAM with assistance from judges Elizabeth Grant AM, Narelle Hargreaves AM, Les Blackley OAM and Trish Keller OAM.

NEW MEMBER – Ms CATHI MOORE AM

Ms Cathi Moore AM is one of fifteen new members who have joined the ACT Branch of the OAA following the 2020 Australia Day Honours. Cathi was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia *for significant service to young women and to the community*.

Her citation covers an extensive commitment of service of nearly 40 years to improving the lives of women and girls in the Canberra community.

Cathi has had a dedication to the YWCA in a range of roles nationally and locally, including as President of YWCA Canberra resulting in it becoming a leading service provider for the Canberra community and young women, mentoring female leaders, and helping facilitate a

quota for women under 30 to have director positions in the association both nationally and locally.

Her commitment has also included service to many community organisations including ACT Council of Social Service, Marymead, Parentline, ACT Community Housing Canberra and assisting the establishment of Womenspeak (Equality Rights Alliance).

Cathi was recognised as Senior Woman of the Year in the 2018 ACT Women's Day awards.

Cathi said "having grown up in the country in Western Australia, I learnt that if you wanted to improve or create a community service you had to roll up your sleeves, and work with others to make it happen." She also noted "young leaders have much to offer at the Board level and it enhances organisations to have a diversity of views and demographics."

WA CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



This photograph was taken in much happier times at my Investiture at Government House. It was with sadness that I received word that the Investiture for the Australia Day 2020 recipients has been postponed. This, of course, is absolutely necessary in order to avoid crowds and keep everyone safe.

Prior to the requirement to cancel indoor events, we were able to hold a Reception for WA recipients and, while it was a much smaller function than originally planned, it was a very happy event and an opportunity to recognise some of those who had received an award. We particularly thank the City of Stirling for hosting this event and the care they took to ensure social distancing.

Our National Board has made the difficult decision to advise Branches that all events and face to face meetings are to be cancelled. This means that plans for the next few months for Western Australia have been put on hold.

We will be monitoring the situation closely and look forward to getting through these difficult times. We wish all our members well and assure you once life returns to normal we will carry on with our plans for member activities

I would like to pay tribute to our outgoing Chairman RADM Mark Bonser AO CSC for his leadership over the past 2 years. Mark will continue on the committee as Immediate Past

Chairman. I would also like to thank Ian Williams AO who stood down as Treasurer at the last AGM but agreed to continue until a replacement Treasurer could be appointed. We welcomed Peter Snow OAM to this role and he was elected unopposed at the AGM. Thanks are also due to retiring members Hon Barbara Scott OAM and Helen Smith OAM for their contribution to the Branch. We welcome Lorraine Hammond AM and Rebecca Tolstoy as new members of the committee..

Bettine Heathcote AM

[Australia Day 2020 Reception](#)

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic at the time of the Reception, the advice was that one could hold a meeting of people under 500. The WA Committee decided to go ahead with the Reception for the Australia Day Honours Award Recipients.

A very pleasant evening ensued, being hosted by His Worship, the Mayor of the City of Stirling, Mark Irwin at the Reception Hall, City of Stirling.

Although 147 had accepted, there was concern by a number of those who had accepted, that they were at risk of infection. The final number of attendees was 77.

It was enjoyed by all who attended. One is always impressed by the recipients and the voluntary work being done in the Community. They come from so many different walks of life. We are hopeful that a number of recent Order of Australia recipients who attended, will join the OAA.

The food and refreshments offered at the end of the ceremony was excellent and socialisation enjoyed, despite the contact restrictions in place .

The Mayor was very welcoming and has offered to hold another Reception for the OAA WA in the future.

[Annual General Meeting](#)

The OAA WA Annual General Meeting and Brunch was held on Sunday 23 February at Nedlands Rugby Club. The retiring Chairman, Mark Bonser, welcomed the members and gave his report. The Association Treasurer's report was received which showed at that time we were in a healthy financial position.

In his address, Mark particularly thanked former Treasurer Ian Williams for his contribution to the Branch and outgoing committee members, Hon Barbara Scott OAM and Helen Smith OAM for their untiring efforts. Western Australia still lags behind most other states in the number of new recipients of an award and Mark encouraged everyone present to think of someone they could nominate. In closing Mark thanked the committee for the work they had done during the year.

Elections were held for the position of Chairman and Committee members. Only one nomination was received for Secretary and Treasurer.

Members of the committee had donated several items for a raffle which was very well received.

Brunch after the Meeting was enjoyed by a number of members and their guests.

EdConnect news

EdConnect held a meeting on 27 February at their Maylands Headquarters to explain their program to a number of interested OAA WA members. Seven attended. It was a very informative meeting, explaining the commitment required. The role is mentoring and supporting children with learning difficulties. EdConnect supports the volunteers and provides legal cover and all essentials. We are hopeful that several of those who attended will sign up. This may be delayed until the present pandemic crisis is over.

Where there's a will ...

On contacting a member who was very active on the Western Australian Committee in the 1990s I learnt he is now a resident at St Ives Centro. Among the residents there are 11 who are members of the Order.

In his words, "Since most of them, like me, are in the upper age group, to put it mildly, we rarely now join in the various functions of the WA Branch."

They do not go out in the evening but on the night of the Annual Dinner they meet in the Clubhouse Lounge where they wear their medallions and propose a toast to the Order before having dinner together in the Clubhouse Dining Room.

He is attempting to have Management erect a board in the Lounge with the names of the residents who have awards, their particular level and year of the award. We hope he will achieve this.