



Welcome from VIC Branch Chair

Welcome to summer and our fourth (final) edition of the Order of Australia Association VIC Branch e-Newsletter for 2021.

It is fantastic to have most of the restrictions lifted regarding social distancing and venue capacity as Victoria starts to return to a new normal.

On a positive note all the Investitures for Queen's Birthday 2021 Honours and Award Recipients were held late November and early December in small groups by the Governor of Victoria, the Honourable Linda Dessau AC.

Our annual lunch on Wednesday November 24 was a virtual event due to restrictions lifted too late for planning. The feedback from members including some from interstate was positive, the speakers Jade Hameister OAM and her father Paul Hameister OAM spoke about their Polar experiences and Hannah Gandy OAA Foundation Scholarship recipient gave us an update on her studies, work in the community and her plans for 2022. Please refer to pages 2, 3 and 4.

Earlier this year the VIC Branch undertook a member survey and based on your feedback has made some changes to our Events program for 2022.

Changes include the annual National Gallery Victoria Winter Masterpieces lecture, exhibition and lunch option on a Sunday in June or July; a lunch after the Annual General Meeting and an end of year dinner. Please refer to page 6 for the 2022 'Save the Date' list of events.

Our first event for 2022 is the Josh Piterman Afternoon Concert on Sunday February 13 from 2.00pm in the Arthur Streeton Auditorium at Sofitel Melbourne on Collins. Level 1 25 Collins Street, Melbourne. Cost \$70 per ticket includes GST + Booking fee, members and guests welcome.

Perfect gift for the festive season, an anniversary, a birthday or thank you. Please refer to page 7 for further details. To book please go to TryBooking <https://www.trybooking.com/BWDHL>

The Victoria Branch of the Order of Australia Association values our members especially those who joined during the last two years of uncertainty and lockdowns. Thank you also to our members who continued to renew their annual and three-year membership during this time.

On a personal note I thank the members of the OAA VIC Branch committee for their work during the year to ensure we stayed connected with our members and plan for the future. 2022 will be a busy year delivering our events and also planning for the 2023 National Conference to be held in Victoria.

Best wishes to our members for the festive season and trust 2022 brings you and those special in your life prosperity, health and optimism.

Please stay safe and well.



Dr Helene Bender OAM - VIC Branch Chair **M:** 0407 261 951 **E:** chairvic@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Our future is in good hands

With inspiring young speakers at our virtual lunch on Wednesday November 24 we agree our future is in good hands. Thank you to Trevor Clark OAM Deputy Chair VIC Branch who was the MC.



The first two speakers Jade Hameister OAM and Paul Hameister OAM, father and daughter talked about their polar explorations including the Polar Hat Trick

In April 2016 at the age of 14, Jade Hameister became the youngest person in history to ski to the North Pole from anywhere outside the last degree.

That year she was recognised by the Australian Geographic Society as Young Adventurer of the Year and

her journey was captured in a National Geographic Channel documentary that aired in 170 countries in late 2016.

In August 2016 she delivered a TEDx Talk on why we need to shift the focus for young women from how they appear to the possibilities of what they can do.

In June 2017, aged 15, she became the youngest woman to complete the 550 km crossing of Greenland, the second largest ice cap on the planet unsupported and unassisted.

In January 2018, aged 16, Jade skied 600km from the coast of Antarctica to the South Pole unsupported and unassisted via a new route.

In finishing this incredible journey, Jade set a number of world records including:

- The youngest person to ski from the coast of Antarctica to South Pole unsupported and unassisted
- The first Australian woman in history to ski coast to South Pole unsupported and unassisted
- The youngest to ski to both Poles; and
- The youngest to complete the Polar Hat-Trick.

In 2018, she delivered a speech on climate change at the Vatican as the Oceania Youth Representative and met the Pope.

In late 2018, National Geographic Channel released a feature-length movie of Jade's polar journeys focussing on global warming.

Also in 2018 Pan Macmillan released a book that Jade authored seeking to also educate young people on climate change (also published in the USA).

At the end of 2018 Jade won the Australian Geographic Society Award for Young Adventurer of the Year for a second time and her award was presented to her by Prince Harry.



November 24 virtual lunch continued:

In the 2019 Queens Birthday Honours, Jade was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for service to Polar Exploration

Jade is currently 20, has finished her second year of a combined Bachelor of Commerce and Global Studies at Monash University.

Paul Hameister OAM is best known as “Jade’s dad”.

As well as accompanying Jade on her polar expeditions, Paul has climbed the Seven Summits (including Everest in 2011) and completed a 1,000km expedition through unexplored Amazon jungle sponsored by the Australian Geographic Society with his then 14-year old son in 2018.



Paul is an ex-lawyer and investment banker.

He is Executive Chairman of property development group, Hamton, which he founded in

2005. Hamton has completed or current projects approaching \$4billion in Melbourne’s inner and middle ring suburbs.

Hamton is currently the development partner for Moonee Valley Racing Club and North Melbourne Football Club.

Paul has a range of other business and charitable interests.

In 2021, he received the Melbourne University Faculty of Business & Economics Alumni of Distinction Leadership Award.

In the 2019 Queens Birthday Honours, Paul was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for service to Exploration and Business.



November 24 virtual lunch continued:

Our third speaker was the Order of Australia Association Foundation 2018 Scholarship recipient Hannah Gandy.

This year Hannah completed a Bachelor of Laws/ Bachelor of Arts (Politics) with a high distinction in both degrees at La Trobe University and will be admitted as a lawyer early next year.

She was awarded the Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholarship in recognition of her work with youth, and was mentored by former Prime Minister The Honourable Julia Gillard AC.

Hannah is still doing community work. COVID really presented challenges in working with young people face to face; she was proactive in her approach. Working as a youth worker for Banyule, she created resources about how young persons can keep positive during lockdown and how to access mental health services.



She continued to run community events when the restrictions allowed, and has worked online to help keep people and kids active with skating through lockdowns by posting tutorials and challenges online for them to stay connected.

In addition she has been volunteering for Legal Action for Afghanistan doing offshore visa applications.

Hannah recently started assisting a Barrister in discrimination law research, and is still working at the Fair Work Commission.

September next year Hannah is off to London to continue her studies.

The General Sir John Monash Foundation last month announced the 18 recipients of its 2022 scholarships, Australia's most prestigious postgraduate overseas study program.

Among the recipients is Hannah Gandy. She plans to study a Master of Laws specialising in Law and Social Justice at University College London.

She is passionate about improving the lives of disadvantaged young persons through law and understanding how law impacts youth in areas like education, employment, health, and through family and criminal law.

The General Sir John Monash Foundation received 245 applicants and conducted 115 first round interviews and then 40 national interviews to determine the final 18 recipients.

The scholarship selection criteria include demonstrated excellence in their field, leadership ability and a vision to deliver a positive impact for the benefit of Australia.

Hannah has spoken at various Order of Australia Association VIC Branch events as an OAA Foundation scholarship recipients, I know many of our members will follow the next chapter in her life as she heads to London. We wish her success and welcome the opportunity to hear from her again after she returns.

Donors to the 2023 Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholarship

Thank you the OAA VIC Branch members and VIC Branch Regional Groups who have made a donation to the 2023 Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholarship. The scholarship will be presented to a second year university student at the OAA National Conference in Victoria May 2023

The Order of Australia Association Foundation is supporting the next generation of leaders by helping promising young Australians to achieve their potential for the benefit of future generations of Australians.

The Foundation provides a national focus for the purpose of The Order of Australia Association to celebrate and promote outstanding Australian citizenship. The Foundation does this by annually sponsoring scholarships to Australian students in their early years of tertiary study.

The applicants are assessed for selection against the following criteria:-

- showing potential as future leaders in their field of study;
- community involvement;
- benefiting the Australian community in future years through the Scholarship award and their specialist knowledge;
- needing financial assistance to benefit the completion of their studies; and
- having the ability to gain significantly from the guidance of suitably experienced volunteer mentors who have received appointments and awards in the Order of Australia.

Member Donors as at December 7, 2021:

Anonymous (1)
Bender OAM – Helene
Daly AM – Peter
Haycroft OAM – Margaret
Kane AM - June
Knight OAM - Ian
Lange-Mohr OAM – Jill
Paton AO – Elaine
Pointer OAM – Michael
O'Hara OAM– Patricia
Thomas OAM - Barbara

Regional Group Donors:

Barwon Regional Group
Mallee Regional Group
Melbourne Central Regional Group
North Central Suburbs Regional Group
North East & Goulburn Valley Regional Group
South Central Suburbs Regional Group
South Western Vic Regional Group
Western Suburbs Regional Group



Donations are still being accepted toward the 2023 VIC Branch OAA Foundation Scholarship

Direct Deposit to OAAF BSB 013-006 Acc 314735771

Please email confirmation of payment together with Foundation Donation Form to email:
sec@oaafoundation.com.au. Tax receipt will be issued.

VICTORIA BRANCH EVENTS 2022

NOTE: Based on current State of Victoria regulations, attendees at hospitality venues in Victoria are required to use QR code sign in, wear a mask inside except when eating or drinking and show confirmation they are double vaccinated or have proof of a government medical exemption.

All venues selected by the VIC Branch for our events are accessible by members and guests of all abilities.

SAVE
THE
DATE

Sunday February 13: 2 Josh Piterman Concert at Sofitel Melbourne on Collins Level 1 25 Collins Street, Melbourne in the Arthur Streeton Auditorium.

Join international musical theatre performer Josh Piterman star of the upcoming Phantom of the Opera. Josh will be accompanied by leading Australian musical director, pianist and composer John Foreman OAM for an intimate afternoon of classical music and musical theatre favourites with a creative vision and lively chat along the way. Book now – refer to page 7.



Wednesday February 23: 10.30am to 12.30pm. The Inspiring Australians Oration will be delivered by Arron Wood AM. This event will be a similar format to previous OAA VIC Branch Orations with students from three senior schools invited and an OAA Foundation recipient will also provide members and guests with an update of their studies, employment or pro-bono experience and community work.

Wednesday March 30: 10.45am sign in for our Annual General Meeting for financial members at William Angliss Institute the specialist training provider for the foods, tourism, hospitality, event and hotel management industries, delivering a range of courses within Australia and Internationally. Lunch at 12noon in the William Angliss Restaurant with speaker Elleni Bereded-Samuel AM

June/July on a Sunday - National Gallery of Victoria Winter Masterpieces event; waiting for 2022 exhibition dates. The event will include onsite lecture, exhibition and a lunch option

Thursday September 1: 10.15pm to 12.30pm VIC Branch Reception to welcome 2022 Australia Day and Queen's Birthday recipients who have joined the Association; the committee decided to take this approach noting many local government councils host civic receptions for recipients. The VIC Branch reception is a thank you to recipients who join the Association.

Thursday November 24: 6.15pm End of Year Dinner for members and guests at William Angliss Restaurant with speaker Allan Myers AC QC.

The VIC Branch will also host two virtual events with topics and speakers of interest; this allows us to communicate with members who for various reasons are unable to attend face-to-face events.

JOSH PITERMAN LIVE

with

- Musical Director, John Foreman OAM
- Master of Ceremonies, David Mann AM

CONCERT FOR THE FUTURE

On the afternoon of Sunday, February 13 at the Sofitel Melbourne on Collins please join international musical theatre performer Josh Piterman, star of the upcoming Phantom of the Opera. Josh will be accompanied by leading Australian musical director, pianist and composer John Foreman OAM for an intimate afternoon show of classical-crossover music and musical theatre favourites with a creative vision and lively chat along the way.

The 'Concert for the Future' is supporting the Order of Australia Association Foundation VIC Branch Scholarship the future generation of leaders to achieve their potential.

This is the perfect gift for the upcoming festive season, birthdays, anniversaries or a thank you to someone special.

NOTE: Based on current State of Victoria regulations, attendees at hospitality venues in Victoria are required to use QR code sign in, wear a mask inside except when eating or drinking and show confirmation they are double vaccinated or provide proof of a government medical exemption.



THE
ORDER OF AUSTRALIA
ASSOCIATION
VICTORIA BRANCH

S O F I T E L
HOTELS & RESORTS

Bookings via www.trybooking.com/BWDHL

Cost: \$70 per person inclusive of GST + booking fee

**TICKETS
NOW
ON SALE
SUNDAY
13 FEB
2022
2PM - SHOW**

Arthur Streeton Auditorium,
Sofitel Melbourne on Collins,
Level 1, 25 Collins St
Melbourne



Follow Josh Piterman on

 **@joshpiterman**

Regional Group NEWS and EVENTS including 2022 AGM dates

Please note the same State of Victoria hospitality regulations regarding QR sign in, mask wearing inside and vaccination or exemption verification is required for OAA Regional Group events.

In addition to VIC Branch events noted above, our Regional Groups organise morning teas, lunches, evening networks and dinners. Please refer to the next few pages and also keep checking the website for upcoming events. Members and their guests are invited to all Regional Group events. <http://www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au>

Barwon Regional Group

Sunday 27 February – Annual General Meeting (Drysdale)



Barwon Regional Group fitted in two events after the late November restrictions were lifted.

The first event was a Civic Reception hosted by the City of Greater Geelong on Monday November 22 for Order of Australia 2021 Australia Day and Queen's Birthday recipients in the Barwon Region.

Photo: Janet (Jan) Synot OAM with the Mayor of the City of Greater Geelong Stephanie Asher.

Jan's citation is for service to the arts, to the community, and to badminton.

Jan's husband Ross Synot OAM was an Australia Day 2015 recipient for service to sport and the community of Geelong.

Ross is also a past member of the Barwon Regional Group committee.

The second event was the annual Christmas lunch at Waurin Ponds Hotel on Friday November 26, with speaker Craig Drummond President of the Geelong Football Club since 2020. Members had the opportunity to bring Christmas gifts for a child up to age 12 years for distribution through the Norlane Baptist Church.

Central Highlands Wimmera

Sunday 20 February - Annual General Meeting (Ararat)

Eastern Suburbs Regional Group

Two editions of our newsletter have now been circulated to members and we have been grateful for expressions of appreciation from recipients. Copies are also sent to new awardees. It is our hope that we can continue to publish newsletters at intervals of three to four months.

We have organised three webinars for 2021, our last one being on Thursday December 9 with Susan Alberti AC, Chairperson of the Susan Alberti Medical Research Foundation. Susan will share with us some of her experience and insights about what is important in society.

Tuesday 22 February – Annual General Meeting

At this time there is still some hesitancy about a physical event, but we are investigating possibilities for a suitable venue.

Our first two webinars in 2022 will feature:-

Dr Shane Huntington OAM, Science Communicator, on Thursday February 17 and

Rev Jim Pilmer OAM, speaking about his work as a Police Chaplain on Thursday April 28

Frankston Mornington Peninsula Region Group

Thursday 24 February – Annual General Meeting

The Frankston Mornington Peninsula Regional Group has recently presented Allan Pizzey AM with a Certificate of Appreciation.

The Certificate, presented by Regional Group Secretary, Rod Nelson AM, recognised Allan's many years of service to the Group and the community.

In this way the Regional Group added some local flavour to the 2007 Member of the Order of Australia who is a Life Membership of the Association.



Allan's professional career spanned the building and construction industry in a range of locations across the nation.

But it was his outstanding contributions to the community that truly set him apart from so many.

A keen and accomplished sailor, he was a driving force in the building of the facilities for the Blairgowrie Yacht Squadron.

Allan also served as Commodore at the BYS and on the Victorian Yachting Council.

While this notes a few of his professional and community achievements, the Regional Group especially appreciated the meticulous approach he took to managing the Schools Awards the Regional Group ran for many years.

With strong education credentials from his 17-year terms on the Boards of Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar and St

Michael's Grammar, Allan knew the importance of recognising and encouraging young achievers.

Despite dealing with health challenges in recent years, Allan remained focused on ensuring the Awards were managed in a totally thorough and professional manner.

Over the years he headed the program dozens of students were recognised and supported.

Allan was always full of ideas – particularly for getting young people involved as he saw them as the future of the Order.

On behalf of the Regional Group and its members thank you Allan for an outstanding job.

Photo:

Monterey Secondary College Frankston was the winning School and Mrs Jones-Piinkett Deputy Principal accepted the Award from Allan Pizzey AM.

It is with sadness the Chair of Frankston Mornington Peninsula Region Group Geoff Walsh AO noted the passing of Allan Pizzey AM since this article was written. Our thoughts are with Allan's family, his many friends and colleagues.

Gippsland Regional Group

Sunday 13th March – Annual General Meeting

Loddon-Campaspe Regional Group

Friday 25th March – Annual General Meeting (Bendigo)

Mallee Regional Group

Wednesday 16th March – Annual General Meeting at 5.30pm via Zoom

Melbourne Central Regional Group

Wednesday 23rd March – Annual General Meeting (Kooyong Tennis Club)

North Central Suburbs Regional Group

Wednesday 2nd March – Annual General Meeting

Despite the various periods and level of lockdowns during 2021 the North Central Suburbs Regional Group has continued to maintain a level of contact mainly through regular ZOOM sessions and newsletters.

ZOOM sessions with a guest speaker have been held monthly with the following guest speakers:

Aug: Duncan Stalker OAM – Principal and Chair 2014 OAA National Conference

Sep: Professor Ian Freckelton AO QC – Life after the Pandemic

Oct: Professor Julie Bernhardt AM - co-leader of The Florey Institute's Stroke theme

Nov: Peter Jones AM – Peter Jones Special Events

Each of the sessions has been well attended by members and their partners. The Group has also welcomed a number of members from other Regional Groups at these sessions and also has welcomed the Chair and Treasurer of the Western Australian Branch

The Group continues to use OAA Merchandise for gifts to guest speakers, who are members of OAA and has now commenced presenting the OAA Certificate of Appreciation to the other guest speakers along with a donation to their organisation.

Newsletters are sent every second month to all members, including the six members without email addresses. The November edition provided members with updates on the Group's proposed activities particularly the various Zoom sessions for both the remainder of 2021 and the proposed 2022 program of events.

Annual Program 2022:

The committee has set a draft program for 2022 which includes a series of face to face meetings coupled with the continuation of the evening ZOOM sessions.

Member's Booklet:

The Group has prepared a member's booklet which was distributed in early November. The group has expressed its appreciation to Barb Brook OAM for her assistance in compiling the Member's Booklet.

OAA Foundation Scholarship Contribution:

The Group has agreed to contribute \$500 to the OAA Foundation towards the scholarship to be presented by the Vic Branch at the 2023 National Conference.

North Central Suburbs Regional Group continued

Vale Arthur Wilson OAM

North Central Suburbs Regional Group was saddened to hear of the passing of Arthur Wilson OAM in mid-November. Arthur received his medal in the 2019 Queen's Birthday Honours list for service to Australian Rules Football.

Arthur had a long and proud history with the Fitzroy and Brisbane Lions Football Clubs. For more than half a century since 1965 Arthur worked in a variety of positions which included recruiting manager, secretary and football manager.



He was a life member of both clubs and inducted into the Brisbane Lions Past Players and Officials' Hall of Fame, in 2016. Arthur was also responsible for the establishment of the Fitzroy-Brisbane Lions museum at Marvel Stadium.

North East and Goulburn Valley Regional Group

Unfortunately, our October luncheon had to be cancelled due to Covid restrictions so we have not been able to meet our new recipients from Queen's Birthday.

However, the remaining three have kindly provided us with a resume of their OA award. Congratulations and welcome to the following three new members.

(Also, to note, Bill Church OAM joins wife Adele Church OAM as another one of our member couples. That makes three member couples from Yarrawonga/Mulwala. There must be something good in the lake!)

Bill Church OAM

Bill was awarded his OAM for service to the community of Yarrawonga. Bill a retired farmer served on the Tungamah Shire Council for 14 years and was the last Shire President (before Council Merger in 1994).

After moving to Yarrawonga in 1990 Bill became actively involved in the community serving in many roles as listed below:

- Yarrawonga Mulwala Historical Society President, 1994-2008 and Life Member 2015
- Yarrawonga Mixed Probus Club - Former President and Inaugural Member.
- St Cuthbert's Anglican Church, Yarrawonga - Member of the Vestry, current. Synod Representative, current. Member, Maintenance Team, current.
- St George Anglican Church, Katamatite -Former Church Warden. Former Member, Parish Council.
- Freemasons Victoria -Member, Supreme Grand Chapter Ceremonial Team. Yarrawonga Lodge of St David, Freemasons Victoria. Junior Grand Warden, current. Member, since 2012. Yarrawonga Mark Lodge, Freemasons Victoria. Various executive



roles, since 1970s. Member, since 1964. Ionic Lodge 109 Tungamah, Freemasons Victoria Various executive roles, 1970s-2012. Member, 1952-2012. Yarrawonga Chapter, Royal Arch Masons. Various executive roles, since 1970s. Member, since 1964.

- Tungamah Shire Council -Shire President, (before council merger), 1992. Councillor, 14 years.

Other Community roles:

- Member, Yarrawonga/Mulwala Sub-Branch, Returned and Services League of Australia, 30 years.
- Member, Sun Country Vintage Car Club, 30 years. Ground Crew Member,
- Country Women's Association Team, Red Cross 'Murray Marathon', 2003-2010.
- Lay Representative, Diocesan Synod, Wangaratta, Anglican Church of Australia, 1970's.
- Supporter and Life Member, Boosey District Fire Brigade.
- Awards and Recognition include:

Awarded 50-, 60- and 65-Year Service Jewels, Freemasons Victoria and Award of Merit, Royal Historical Society of Victoria

Vivienne Ritchie AM

Vivienne received her AM for significant service to the Anglican Church of Australia, and to the community. Vivienne has been actively involved serving in many roles some listed below:

- Victorian Probation Officer, 25 years. • Member and Supporter, since circa 1970s.
- Melbourne Recital Centre, since 2013. • Supporter, Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition, current. • Bequestor and Supporter, Australian National Academy of Music, current. • Former Supporter, Musica Viva, Melbourne.
- Delatite Winery • Co-Founder, 1968

Vivienne, from Mansfield says that most local people were surprised by her honour; being unaware of the confidential voluntary work she was undertaking along with her other volunteer roles.

Not only was she doing welfare work for Red Cross 3 days per week but she was also taking on a confidential role of Probation and Parole for 2 days a week.

Having studied psychology and criminology for several years, Vivienne was approached by the Victorian Government to take on this role.

Over the years Vivienne took on over 80 young men (and their parents and families) for probation. This involved going to court with them, encouraging their families to give them more attention, arranging employment for them locally and generally backing them up in the local towns, and with the magistrates.

After counselling the probationers and their families, only one young man, on probation with Vivienne, ended up in gaol. A great testament to the probationer's determination and Vivienne's contribution.

She now insists that when she meets them, lately, they are delighted to introduce her to their own families, which has been immensely rewarding.

The local Shire Council were advised about this confidential role only after the award was announced.



Clive Walker OAM

As per all of us, the award came out of the blue, for services to the Myrtleford Community.

Over time I have been involved with the service Club, Apex, both in Healesville then Myrtleford and later, Rotary International. I was on hospital Boards of Management at Healesville, Myrtleford and Alpine Health. Rostered to deliver meals on wheels, and lately, Myrtleford Men's shed where I

have been secretary Treasurer for 10 years. I am treasurer of the Myrtleford Uniting Church and have been most useful to many groups in Myrtleford, writing submissions for grants.

I am sure this service culture was instilled in me from a young age, as my father and mother were great supporters of their local community.

My profession was Local Government Engineer, and in a small municipality it could also be considered as a Service club in some aspects of its' community role.

The question "of what it meant for me" – It's hard to answer – still hasn't really sunk in yet. When people talk to me about the award, I answer by saying "I yelled the loudest" to get things done. But we all know that it's the support of people around you that make things happen.



Now to replace our generation – young people of today, I believe, are interested in project-based programs. They will give their all for a cause they believe in, rather than "being on a committee" or in a "club". The 2009 bushfires are an example where young people developed ideas and projects to help recovery.

So, thank you to the people of Myrtleford who thought I was worthy of being nominated for the OAM.

Victorian Branch Scholarship

The North East Victoria & Goulburn Valley Regional Group committee has agreed to fund \$500 towards the 2023 Victorian Branch Scholarship. Previously our regional group has donated \$2,500 and \$1,000. We are very pleased to encourage young people in helping to make a difference.

Events for 2022:

Our next function is planned for

Sunday March 27 at Parklake Motel Shepparton. Guest speaker will be Mr Adam Furphy, Managing Director of Shepparton-based manufacturing business J. Furphy & Sons.

This will also be the AGM. A visit to the new Shepparton Arts Museum (SAM) is planned for after lunch. Further details will be available early next year.

Future event diary notes:

Sunday June 27 at Mansfield

Sunday October 9 at Wangaratta

South Central Suburbs Regional Group

It was noted in an earlier report that we were to hold our End of Year Dinner on the 17th of November at a named venue. A week out from the event we were advised that we had too many attendees for their dining room under the regulations in place at the time. A new venue thankfully was sourced and the evening went well under the post covid-19 double vaccinated protocols. The



speaker Mr Jan Sardi AO was a joy to listen to as he related anecdotes about his early life in Melbourne and his journey as an Academy Nominated screenwriter in the film Shine and collaborative works with The Notebook and Secret River and many other notable screen adaptations and TV scripts. A truly gentle, gifted Australian.

Our Regional Group agreed to support the VIC Branch OAA Foundation Scholarship this time around and the funds were sent off. Discussions have been held with the three municipalities in the South Central Suburban Regional Group to recognize their choice of Young

Citizen or Youth of the Year and they have all been receptive of the idea to award a small bursary and a certificate from the Regional Group at the time of the awardees announcement and presentation.

The City of Kingston is still prepared to hold a Civic Reception to the 2020 and 2021 Order of Australia recipients; two have had to be cancelled because of lockdown and density regulations in place at the respective times. They will do the invitations as soon as they can see a window of opportunity.

Arrangements to hold our Thursday February 17 – Annual General Meeting are proceeding well, with Dr. Noel Alpins AM as the guest speaker.

At the AGM two of our long standing members are stepping aside from the Management Committee and there shall be a change of leadership with the annual spill of sitting members.

Our Mid-Year Luncheon venue booked with our guest speaker Professor George Werther AO agreeing to lock in the date following a proposed overseas trip.

We take the opportunity to wish every-one good times with their loved ones over the Festive Season and hope that the New Year brings about joy, health and a certainty of better times ahead following the trials and tribulations stemming from the COVID-19 lockdowns and regulations.

Western Suburbs Regional Group

Thursday 17 February – Annual General Meeting

A moment with 'the father of Australian diamonds'

Geologist Ewen Tyler AM discovered all three of Australia's diamond mines – Argyle and Ellendale in Western Australia, and Merlin in the Northern Territory.

Acting against conventional wisdom, Tyler spent the better part of a decade searching Australia's vast interior for diamond-bearing kimberlites (ancient volcano 'pipelines' filled with diamonds) where none had looked before.

On the verge of having his funding withdrawn, Tyler's team finally found a diamond in a rock sample – but the journey was only beginning. Here, he reflects on the miraculous Argyle story and predicts the future of diamonds in Australia.

How does it feel to look back on the life cycle Argyle project?

It's been a life's journey. I started the search in 1969 and we found Argyle in 1979. We constructed the mine and brought it to production. At one stage it was producing 40 per cent of the world's natural diamonds.

They might not have been top quality, but nevertheless, we had 10 times more diamonds in a tonne of rock than the average, so we were laughing really!

I retired from Ashton Mining in 1990, though I kept an involvement with Argyle until 2002. It was a very, very exciting time – a once-in-a-lifetime affair. And really, from my 45th birthday when we found the first diamond, my life has never been quite the same.

I've become known as the 'father of The Australian diamond industry', which is nonsense in one sense – but its right in another sense. Without me starting it, it wouldn't have gone anywhere



A moment with 'the father of Australian diamonds' continued

What is your fondest memory from the project?

I think the fondest memory is the discovery of the first diamond, on the evening of my 45th birthday in 1973. It was nowhere near Argyle but it represented a milestone in exploration. We had not had any confirmation that there were any diamonds in the Kimberley.

There had been rumours – one story was that there was a chap in the 19th Century who had taken some diamonds to show an abbot at a monastery – but there was nothing on paper that told me that diamonds had ever been found in the Kimberley before.

We'd found a few pieces of chrome diopside a few months before, but to actually find a sample not only with indicator minerals, but a diamond in it, showed we were on the right track. It took us a long time though – it was six years before we stood on the Argyle site.

The other great day was when we crushed the first tonne of ore. I sent a case of Champagne to the engineering team!

Did you ever have any doubts, or any moments when it seemed like it might have all ended?

If we hadn't found the diamond on my birthday, I was expecting to be chucked out of Tanganyika Holdings the following Christmas. I'd more or less got my marching orders.

The money was going to dry up; they were more interested in doing something in the North Sea than continuing to back me. That was the first major hurdle – and there were a lot of hurdles.

There was another when people said, "It's no good buying Australian diamonds – they will all explode if you put them on the polishing wheel." The press were very unkind to us. If you can't sell your product and everyone is against you, it's hard to keep up enthusiasm.

There were lots of government problems too; when we first established the project and were showing alluvial diamonds, the West Australian government was of the opinion they were worth twice as much as they were, so we paid a very substantial royalty.

The government also tried to tell us we couldn't do fly-in-fly-out, saying it would cost us \$50 million to avoid building a town at the mine.

We could have walked then.

When was the first pink stone found at Argyle?

It was something that came out of the alluvial production, before we began mining. Bill Leslie [legal representative in the early years of the project] claims to have one of the first pink diamonds from Argyle but it was not something that we recorded because pinks were a very, very small percentage of the diamonds.

Talking about the pinks made people aware that we had a mine, and we only showed them once per year. While it wasn't part of the equation at the start, the pink diamonds have created the market and awareness of the Argyle Mine itself.

What do you think about the future of diamond mining in Australia?

I am absolutely convinced there are more diamonds. In fact, I'm a participant in the continuing diamond discovery about 600km south of Argyle. The first diamond mine we discovered was Ellendale; though we didn't mine it, others found there was a market for Ellendale yellow diamonds.

It's the same at Merlin in the Northern Territory – another mine we discovered, and mined for a period. It has been shut down but I think there is some stirring to see if it can be brought back.

A moment with 'the father of Australian diamonds' continued

Is there any chance more pink diamonds will be found in Australia?

I think there are, and I'm looking for more! We've got signs of them occurring all around Merlin, some signs around Ellendale, but not much around Argyle.

As a nation, I believe that we've got to keep exploring. It's the nature of this continent we started off with gold – Melbourne wouldn't exist without the 1850 Gold Rush. It's more about finding people who are willing to join this lunatic search! As they say, people who look for diamonds have rocks in their heads – but it's a lot of fun.

Article and photo supplied by Jeweller Magazine

Vacancy for VIC Branch Treasurer

Due to increased work commitments, the current VIC Branch Treasurer Alan Brook OAM no longer has spare time to commit the role. Alan has kindly agreed to continue actioning transactions and required reports using Xero.

Some meetings in 2022 will be face-to-face in Melbourne CBD the third Tuesday of the month from 2.00pm and some will be virtual.

A Position Description outlining the role and responsibilities of the Treasurer is available from VIC Branch Secretary Fred Harrington OAM – Email secvic@theorderofaustralia.asn.au or on the OAA website VIC Branch under Administration Annual General Meeting.

Call for members to join the 2023 National Conference committee

The Order of Australia Association Victoria Branch is hosting the May 2023 National Conference in Victoria. The 2022 National Conference in Canberra will hand over to Victoria next May.

Now Victoria is out of lockdown and venue capacity limitations have been lifted the hospitality and tourism industries are keen to work with us to ensure the 2023 National Conference is a success.

If you would like to have an involvement in planning and coordinating the 2023 National Conference and have the skill set and experience to make a positive contribution we welcome the opportunity to talk with you.



We are currently evaluating three destinations in Victoria for 2023.

The OAA National Executive will approve the destination in Victoria late December 2021 or early January 2022.

2023 conference committee work will focus on evaluating the destination proposals, budget and required sponsorship subject to the destination approved. Initial meetings early next year will be held via ZOOM or

TEAMS

Other work will include conference session speakers and diverse topics that meet the values and purpose of the Order of Australia Association Logistics, Social events and Entertainment.

If you are interested in joining the 2023 Conference committee in January 2022 please contact Helene Bender OAM VIC Branch Chair E: chairvic@theorderofaustralia.asn.au M: 0407 261 951

Investiture at Government House Victoria



The OAA VIC Branch congratulates Pamela (Pam) Robinson who was elevated from OAM (QB 1990) for service to local government and to conservation to AM Queen's Birthday 2021 for significant service to conservation and the environment, and the community.

Pam was also a member of the OAA VIC Branch committee

Pam's 2021 Investiture was held at Government House Victoria in the morning of Wednesday December 1. The weather was perfect for refreshments in the garden after the formalities and no mask required – smiles all round.

Photo L to R: Susi Johnson, Daniel Robinson (Pam's son), Pam Robinson OAM, Linda Bennett and Stacey Williams from Victoria State Government Recognition Matters

The Honourable Sir James Gobbo AC CVO QC 1931-2021

Sir James Gobbo's parents migrated to Australia in 1938 when he was seven.

After graduating from the University of Melbourne, Sir James received a Rhodes scholarship and left Oxford with a BA and MA.

He was appointed to the Supreme Court of Victoria in 1978 and was knighted in 1982 for his services to the community.

He was again honoured for service to the law, multicultural affairs and hospitals by the award of Companion of the Order of Australia in 1993.

After retiring from the bench, he was appointed Lieutenant Governor of Victoria and Governor of Victoria in 1997; the first person of non-English speaking background to be appointed to that office in Australia.

Sir James served as the chair of the Council of the National Library of Australia, the Australian Multicultural Foundation, the National Advisory Commission on Ageing and served on the Council for the Order of Australia. He was generous with his time and knowledge. His legacy will live on. Our thoughts are with Lady Shirley Gobbo and family.

A state funeral to pay tribute to The Honourable Sir James Gobbo AC CVO QC legacy and contribution to the Victorian community was held Tuesday November 16 at St Patrick's Cathedral.



Virtual meeting between Their Excellencies and Victoria Branch

In attendance

VIC Branch Chairman - Helene Bender OAM
Deputy Chair - Trevor Clark OAM
Branch Director - William Lye OAM QC
Membership Secretary - Fred Harrington OAM
Regional Group Co-ordinator - Barb Brook OAM
Merchandise Chair - June Kane AM
Committee members - Barb Thomas OAM and Paul Hemming AO
Regional Group Chairs
Geoffrey Grinter OAM Eastern Suburbs
Geoff Walsh AO Frankston Mornington Peninsula
Graeme Woolacott OAM South Central Suburbs

Discussed:

Awareness of OA awards AD v Australian of the Year awards.

Transparency - videos explaining how the OA system works

Diversity including under represented

Identify achievers in the community who are worthy of nomination

Internal Systems IT improvement in real time to manage the nomination process

Need to make nomination process easier

Give thought to OA lapel pin having a magnet backing for women rather than a pin that damages clothing



Regional Group Chairs as at December 7, 2021

Barwon	Wayne Myers OAM
Central Highlands Wimmera	John Burt OAM
Eastern Suburbs	Geoffrey Grinton OAM
Gippsland	Lorraine Bartling OAM
Loddon-Campaspe	Steven Lee AM
Mallee	VIC Branch committee
Melbourne Central	Trevor Clark OAM
Mornington Peninsula	Geoff Walsh AO
NE & Goulburn Valley	Barbara Thomas OAM
North Central Suburbs	Fred Harrington OAM
South Central Suburbs	Graeme Woolacott OAM
SW Victoria	Peter Habersberger AM RFD
Western Suburbs	John Ravenhall AM

Merchandise Shop

Our Merchandise Shop is taking a short break over the Christmas New Year. Closing Thursday December 23, 2021 and Opening Tuesday January 4, 2022



Order of Australia Association Website

Please refer to the national website for further information regarding the Order of Australia Association Branch and Regional Group news, Merchandise Shop and Order of Australia Award Nominations at <http://www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au>
