



THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION NORTHERN TERRITORY BRANCH

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The Dry Season brings its own round of activities for Order of Australia Association members.

National Conference in Canberra May 19-22

Despite the Covid pandemic roiling on around the country, members from every state and Territory appreciated meeting in person in what was an interesting and productive conference. Organisers agreed this was a pleasing 'demonstration of resilience' in all our Branches.



The NT was represented by four delegates, led by our Chairman Alan James OAM.

Both Ms. Linda Fazldeen AM and Dr. Kerry Eupene AM have shared some thoughts on the conference...

The opening address by the Hon Shane Stone AC QC, outgoing Chair of The Order of Australia Council, provided an insightful overview of the significance of the Order of Australia. He stressed that key elements of service in the community were leadership by example, and integrity, that service to community should be

aligned with selflessness and resilience, and that mentoring brings huge benefits.

This probably set the tone for the other presentations by a diverse range of speakers who covered many topics from their own life experiences. It was interesting to hear the Quantum Physicist talk about the buzz he got out of knowing that for a while he was the only person in the world who knew a particular fact, the Diplomat's wife who taught Middle East men the art of quilt making, and the Chief of Joint Operations giving his assessment of the Ukraine war.

The conference also provided a great opportunity to meet other recipients of the Order of Australia, who represented a diverse group from all over the country. In forums at the conference concern was expressed that only 35% of awardees join the Association, and discussion followed about the need to promote the diversity of gender/age/ethnicity already existing in the Association, and to make it more attractive to younger people? At present the average age is 74...

The conference dinner in the presence of the Governor General and his wife presented a great opportunity for our local scholarship holder, Shanae Kuo, to shine on stage. This followed the group singing led by Mrs Hurley. The conference was certainly interesting, enjoyable and provided a few pointers on how we may run a similar event in the NT. In the meantime, we can look forward and plan to attend the next **National Conference in Geelong, Victoria, May 18-21 2023.**

Queens Birthday Order of Australia Awards

Queens Birthday honours were conferred on the following meritorious Territorians representing a variety of interests. We heartily congratulate them. If you see them, please encourage them to join our Association.

Laurence Ah Toy AM

A third-generation Territorian, Mr. Ah Toy was born in the old Darwin hospital and attended Darwin High School. He has been recognised for his contributions to Australia's primary industries, education sector and communities. Following the bombing of Darwin in 1942 his family evacuated to Adelaide, and after returning, he attended Darwin High School. He became a chartered accountant and started contributing professional advice to voluntary organisations in the Top End. He became chairman of various primary industry bodies, and was a pioneer in the Northern Territory's mango and buffalo industries. Despite being in his 80s, Mr Ah Toy has not given up his duties - he still directs Koolpinyah pastoral station with about 3,000 cattle and 2,000 buffaloes.



Professor Hilary Winchester AM



Charles Darwin University (CDU) University Secretary, Professor Hilary Winchester, has been recognized as a Member of the Order of Australia for her significant services to governance and university administration. Her distinguished academic career began at the University of Oxford, where she completed a Doctorate, laying the foundations for a stellar career in teaching and research. Professor Winchester has Chaired 12 Accreditation and Review panels and has led Governance reviews into 16 universities and training providers globally. CDU Vice-Chancellor Professor

Scott Bowman AO congratulated Ms. Winchester on her honour. "I regard her as the best university administrator in the country," Professor Bowman said.

Robert Richards OAM and Julianne Tyson OAM

This husband-and-wife team from Humpty Doo Barramundi have both been appointed to the Order of Australia. They built their barramundi farm on the failed rice project paddocks off the Adelaide River. Bob invested in the fledgling barra farm in 1994 with little knowledge of aquaculture – he had lived in Tennant Creek, and Julii was a librarian raised on a dairy farm in NSW. The operation initially had no running water or all-weather road access, but through study, investment and sheer hard work, the couple have built the business to become the second-largest of its kind in the world. Among many accolades and positions, Bob is a founding member of the Australian Barramundi Farmers Association and was its president in the 1990s. Julii was Director of Women in Seafood Australasia from 2003 – 2016. They have both been involved in developing barra farming around the country and overseas, and are passionate about contributing to the community.



Robert Calaby OAM

Robert Calaby has received his award for many years of service to airports in the Northern Territory. Robert Calaby grew up in Canberra with a passion for aviation, and relocated to the NT in 1986 for work as a surveyor. When he was 19 he lost an arm in a motorbike accident, but did not let that dim his interest in all things



flying. From 1997-1999 Mr. Calaby was a Technical Supervisor for the Federal Airports Corporation, and served in the operations department of Darwin International Airport from 1999-2009, assisting with runway infrastructure. He worked on other large-scale projects such as the construction of the Tindal RAAF base, helped evacuate people from Timor in 1999, and with medical retrievals after the 2004 Bali Bombing. Currently the Aerodrome Safety and Standards Manager for NT Airports, Robert has also chaired the Australian Airport Association's Emergency Working Group.

Judith Henschke OAM

Dedicated volunteer Judith Henschke has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for her work in the disability sector. Mrs. Henschke has had a long association with Down Syndrome Association NT and is a volunteer and Board Member of Total Recreation. Judith feels that getting to know a person with a hearing disability 20 years ago help her develop and understand and empathy for people with disability.



Robert Shewring OAM



NT Vietnam veteran Bob Shewring has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for a lifetime of service to veterans and their families. Now President of Veterans Australia NT, he has served in the community as a volunteer in many contexts. Among his many achievements is bringing home Corporal Reg Hillier, the only Territorian to die in active service in the Vietnam War. He then lobbied to bring back 25 other soldiers, and when Operation Bring Them Home was successful in 2016, Bob was named NT Senior Australian of the Year. He continues to support veterans and their families and is currently advocating for a veterans' health and wellbeing treatment facility. Bob was also the inaugural President of Southern Districts Football Club, and is a former Chair of Freds Pass Reserve.

Annual Dinner July 11, 2022

Sixty guests – OAA NT members and friends – attended a most enjoyable dinner in the Signature Lounge of the Hilton Hotel in Mitchell Street, Darwin. We were delighted that our patron, Her Honour the Honourable Vicki O'Halloran AO, and her husband joined us for the occasion. She gave an uplifting speech encouraging members to nominate people in the community worthy of an Order of Australia, and emphasised how much pleasure it gave her to actually make these awards on investiture days. We were reminded of the diversity of our population and the variety of contributive and volunteer work that people from every walk of life render to enhance our quality of life.

*The Administrator
addressing dinner guests*



We were also privileged to hear from **Mr. Barry Coulter AO**, who shared some anecdotes from his life, as referenced in his book trilogy “A Dreadful Mistake”, as well as some thoughts about the Territory’s future, and from **Mr. Luke Gosling OAM, MP**, who shared some insights from his position as Member for Solomon and the Australian Parliament.



Our third speaker was Ms. Shanae Kuo, Order of Australia Foundation Scholarship recipient in 2019. Shanae was featured in the last Order magazine, along with other Foundation Scholarship

winners. She has completed her Bachelor of Secondary Education, and has amazingly wide interests including science, animals, the environment, music, and the welfare of rural and remote people.



Guests at the Dinner also enjoyed some beautiful piano playing and singing from young high school student Kevin Valerio, whose rendition of Elton John’s “Rocket Man” was particularly popular – and topical against the recent NASA rocket launchings from Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory!



Kevin with our patron



Guests at Dinner





The NT Chapter of the Order of Australia Association is much smaller than branches interstate. This has the happy advantage of enabling most members to know each other as friends. At the dinner it would be safe to say that most attendees knew most of the others there. At functions like our annual dinner, when we gather to acknowledge the achievements of others and celebrate their awards, we also enjoy the opportunity to catch up with each other and re-connect. This is no less important than the official business of our meetings.



*Photos - courtesy of
Hon Peter Styles*





Featured Member – Dr. Albert Foreman OAM

Dr. Foreman was awarded an OAM in 2017 for service to medicine, but you could be forgiven for wondering why the date was not much earlier. At 91, Albert is still working as an ENT doctor six days a week, after a lifetime of service in many fields and countries.

Before medicine, Dr. Foreman had several careers. He first came to the Territory in 1957 as a civil engineer with the Commonwealth Works Department in Darwin, working on the Ludmilla subdivision, the Parap water tower, and supervising a team dredging Darwin harbour for unexploded bombs.

He then spent four years in and around Alice Springs and the Barkly region doing town water supply, sanitation and sewerage works, as well as working on highways and bush roads. Engineering also took him to Katherine, where he was part of a team who built the first bridge over the King River, and worked on the Boorooloola and Roper River Roads.

Feeling the need for a change, Albert left engineering to study theology, but before being ordained, he decided in favour of a position as senior engineer for roads and aerodromes in Papua New Guinea, at times teaching maths at Port Moresby University.

In 1971 Dr. Foreman took another turn and decided to take up medicine. Some supervisors expressed a concern that he was too old to start this profession at the age of 40, but he was finally accepted, and his new career took off. As he himself says, “Medicine is good for you – it gets me out of bed.”!

His work as a doctor has taken him to many countries, including Swaziland, Tanzania, Israel, India, and to Ethiopia at the height of the famine in the 1980s. He has also been to many outback communities with the Port Augusta Flying Doctor Service and worked in Alice Springs, Katherine and Darwin Hospitals.

Dr. Foreman’s office is reputed to hold a museum-like store of historic photos and memorabilia, but there’s no substitute to actually talking to him! He is a living legend.

A personal note from the newsletter editor, Nora Lewis: I discovered only two weeks ago that soon after Albert graduated in engineering, one of his girl-



friends who had also just finished training – as a music teacher, left to go to South India, and wound up at a boarding school teaching music to missionaries’ children in the 1950s. I was one of those children! I remember my first music teacher - Miss Sutherland – with huge fondness and gratitude. Our connections really are worth savoring!

Acknowledgement to the ABC Darwin for information in this article.



**On the subject of nonagenarians... We extend our heartiest congratulations
to a former Administrator of the Northern Territory
The Honourable Ted Egan AO
on turning 90 years old just this month – on July 6.**

Nora Lewis, Editor