

Communique from the Branch Chair

Sombre Greetings to fellow members of the Queensland Branch of The Order of Australia Association (OAA).

We are all in mourning.



Westminster Abbey

The passing of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, on 8 September 2022 while not unexpected in view of notional human time frames and last images, still startled our community and nation given that just recently we had been celebrating her Platinum jubilee. The manifest out-pouring of genuine grief throughout the world surely confirmed what we already knew. Our Sovereign was unique on the pedestal of sustained and consummate duty and service. If ever we mortals need reassurance of the essential value of passionate commitment, volunteering and gratis input into our communities then her role model life so provides.

On behalf of the Queensland membership of the Order of Australia Association I recorded Condolences on both the Governor General's digital platform and a written record at Government House in the presence of Her Excellency and Professor Nimmo.

'We mourn the passing of a beloved, unique Sovereign whose seven decadal commitments to duty and service ensures her elevated memory for the ages.'



Chair directed to the Condolence desk at Government House by Her Excellency, the Governor of Queensland, Dr Jeannette Young PSM and Professor Nimmo

We have all been engrossed in a historic array of local, national and overseas events all captured in exceptional detail by the media cameras of the world. The neigh immediate grandeur and tradition of the Accession ceremonies with consequential Proclamation ceremonies overseen by State Governors, a national Proclamation presided over by the Governor General, all performed with dignity and precision. Who could ever forget the moving tributes of the thousands who lined the paths of the Queens cortège from Balmoral to Buckingham Palace, the 14 hour queues for the Lying in State at London's Westminster Hall and the traditional pageantry of a unique extended funeral with world leaders amassed and televised to a massive global audience. Many moving Thanksgiving Services were held, including at St John's Cathedral, Brisbane, prior to the National Day of Mourning and our National Memorial Service.

Our allegiance has of necessity now been refocused. Charles III (Charles Philip Arthur George) is King of the United Kingdom and 14 other Commonwealth realms, including Australia. He was the longest-serving heir apparent in British history and, at the age of 73, is the oldest person to assume the throne.

Long Live the King.



Flowers at Queen's statue Government House

The death of the Monarch meant that Investitures for the recipients of awards from the Queen's Birthday 2022 tranche had to be urgently postponed along with the customary celebration and acknowledgement at the Queensland Branch hosted lunch. Our Patron, the Governor, was also directly impacted as her Investiture as an AC by the Governor General in Canberra was also postponed. We await advice from Government House on replanned dates.

One activity that went ahead with the concurrence of Government House and the Parliament House venue was the annual Secondary Schools Citizenship awards on Friday 16 September. Her Honour, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Queensland, Helen Bowskill, presented plaques to 13 selected Grade 12 students before a supportive family, teachers and friends group of 133 persons. The judging panel of Dina Browne AO, Peter Blatch OAM and Chris Lassig from the Department of Education had the healthy challenge of evaluating 74 nominations from 53 schools sited across the State. Every nominee will receive a Certificate of Commendation. The Branch records our thanks to Mr Tim Fairfax AC for his continuing sponsorship of this premier event on our yearly schedule.

A number of well patronised OAA Queensland events proceeded the sad news from Scotland. Regional lunches were held in Cairns, Gold Coast and Bribie Island with a bumper turnout at the Banyo Golf club to hear Dr Con Aroney AM speak about heart attacks and prevention. The extended pulse of questions afterwards attests to the topicality of this theme amongst the OAA membership.

Flexibility with event schedules and numbers attending our functions is still the nature of the times and our convenors and organisers are complimented on their unflappable modes of operation.

It was a pleasure to represent the Association at the Australian National Flag Day Ceremony at City Hall hosted by the Right Honourable Lord Mayor, Councillor Adrian Schinner, on 3 September. Whilst not a veteran I proudly support the flag of our nation under which my father (WW2), grandfather (Gallipoli) and great grandfather (Boer War, South Africa, resigned Commission 1905) served.

In closing I share a poem that fits the momentous history making events we all have witnessed these past weeks.

Keep well

Kind regards



22 September 2022



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Attachment 1:

On the Death of a Noble Lady

Time, when thou shalt bring again
Pallas from the Trojan plain,
Portia from the Roman's hall,
Brynhild from the fiery wall,
Eleanor, whose fearless breath
Drew the venom'd fangs of Death,
And Philippa doubly brave
Or to conquer or to save--

When thou shalt on one bestow
All their grace and all their glow,
All their strength and all their state,
All their passion pure and great,
Some far age may honour then
Such another queen of men.

Henry John Newbolt (1862 – 1938)