



THE
ORDER OF AUSTRALIA
ASSOCIATION
VICTORIA BRANCH

OAA VIC Branch Chair's Report for January 1 to December 31, 2022

With COVID-19 restrictions being lifted late 2021 the Victoria Branch planned to hold four face-to-face events and one virtual in 2022 open to members and guests plus a Thank You Reception for recipients who joined the Association in 2022.

At the start of 2022 there was still a reluctance to be out and about, toward the middle of the year VIC Branch events were fully booked – thank you members for your support.

Some of our Regional Groups returned to face-to-face events while others opted for virtual events. Hopefully 2023 will see an increase in face-to-face events to ensure ongoing connection with our members.

There were 187 Order of Australia Honours & Awards recipients from Victoria announced on Australia Day and 206 Queen's Birthday holiday. The percentage of recipients converted to members in 2022 is in excess of the 35% KPI set by the Branch.

We thank the Governor of Victoria and her staff for the invitation to attend the Investitures recognising Order of Australia recipients recognised for their exceptional achievements and contribution to Australia.

As Branch Chair I extended the invitation to committee members to attend the 2022 Investitures.

OAA VIC Branch hosted Events during 2022:

February 23 (Wednesday morning): Inspiring Australians Oration at the Melbourne Town Hall delivered by Arron Wood AM.

Stacey Williams from the Department of Premier & Cabinet spoke about preparing quality Order of Australia nominations.

Senior secondary school students attended.

Event MC David Mann AM

March 30 (Wednesday): Annual General Meeting and Annual Lunch at William Angliss Restaurant with speaker Elleni Bereded-Samuel AM.

Event MC Fred Harrington OAM

July 6 (Wednesday): Early evening virtual event with speaker Pam Vardy OAM, her topic was an insight into and the benefits of community gardens on public housing estates.

Event MC Barb Brook OAM.

IT assistance Michelle Challis

August 7 (Sunday): Melbourne Winter Masterpieces; The Picasso Century lecture and exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria and lunch next door at Arts Centre Melbourne were fully booked.

In our 2021 member survey there was support for a Sunday NGV event and lunch – thank you to members and guests who booked.

September 1 (Thursday morning): Thank You Reception for Order of Australia recipients who joined the Association in 2022. This event was held at the Melbourne Town Hall.

Wendy Stapleton, Ally Mac and Angie Stapleton sang the National Anthem and provided entertainment at the end of formalities.

Event MC: David Mann AM

November 24 (Thursday): End of Year Dinner at William Angliss Restaurant was fully booked with speaker Allan Myers AC KC.

2018 OAA Foundation scholarship recipient Jeremy Doupe provided members and guests with an update on his studies, overseas work, community projects and current employment. The Branch also invited family representatives of Jeremy's scholarship donor The Family of Jack Mayer OAM.

Also in our 2021 member survey there was support for a dinner event – thank you to members and guests who booked.

Event MC David Mann AM

It was a pleasure in 2022 to return to the Melbourne Town Hall, William Angliss Restaurant, NGV and Arts Centre Melbourne.

There was an opportunity at most VIC Branch events in 2022 for members to purchase OAA Merchandise.

At the 2022 National Conference in Canberra May 19-22 the hand-over to Victoria for the 2023 National Conference occurred. The 2023 National Conference will be held in Geelong May 18-21.

The OAA VIC Branch in conjunction with members and some VIC Regional Groups sponsored an Order of Australia Association Foundation scholarship in 2022 to be presented to a second year Medical Radiations student from RMIT University at the 2023 National Conference Dinner on Saturday May 20 at Mt Duneed Estate.

The Order of Australia Association Victoria Branch in September joined the nation in remembering Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the longest-reigning monarch in Commonwealth history and the Sovereign head of the Order of Australia. Her life has been an inspiration, one dedicated to service.

On behalf of The Order of Australia Association Victoria Branch I signed the official Condolence Book at Government House on Monday September 12 to mark the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and attended the ceremony where His Majesty King Charles III was proclaimed as the new Sovereign of Australia by Her Excellency the Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria. In Victoria, when the reigning Monarch dies, all Parliamentarians, Chief Justice, Lt Governor have to be re-sworn with allegiance to the new King.

In recent years we have taken time at the Annual General Meeting to pause and reflect on the members and partners of members who passed away since our last Annual General Meeting.

At the time of writing this report some Regional Groups had not finalised their December 31, 2022 financial reports for various reasons delaying the National Treasurer and National Auditor.

I acknowledge the support we continue to receive from Peter Jones AM storing our flags, banner and medal board plus delivering and collecting them from event venues.

Noted at the 2022 March 30 AGM, due to communication issues with the National Treasurer; Alan Brook OAM sent an email at 5.26pm on Friday March 4, 2022 noting "As I have no control over who has access to the accounts and what transactions and or alterations are being made, without advice, I think it best that I cease immediately in the role of treasurer for the OAA Victorian Branch. I cannot in all honesty accept responsibility for the accounts or present reports as a true and accurate representation of the financial status."

Having received Alan's email I advised the National Chairman and it was agreed OAA VIC Branch would contract the OAA National bookkeeper at a commercial rate.

At the OAA Vic Branch Annual Lunch on March 30 a member spoke with Interim Secretary (Fred) and myself offering to join the committee and use his skills. Fred liaised and met with the member who attended the July meeting as an observer; noting the IT skills required he responded saying he did not have the necessary skills.

August 2022 Alan Brook OAM offered to assist the VIC Branch committee as required. A Circular Resolution was sent to the committee; 5 replied yes, 1 abstained and 2 did not vote to the resolution that Alan be co-opted to assist the committee as required. Due to other commitments, Alan was unable to attend any OAA VIC Branch committee meetings in 2022.

At the 2022 Annual General Meeting two members were co-opted to the committee for a one year appointment, Teresa De Fazio OAM and Grant Coultman-Smith OAM.

Due to health and family commitments Grant was unable to fulfill the committee Position Description, he resigned in August 2022.

Teresa has attended most 2022 meetings; she has assisted with a couple of articles for the e-Newsletter and worked with the Deputy Chair and Branch Nominated Director regarding diverse Order of Australia nominations.

David Gregory OAM was invited to attend the November committee meeting; David has a strong business background, he was co-opted to oversee OAA Merchandise.

On behalf of the VIC Branch I thank all the committee members for their input as we worked toward a new normal in 2022

In closing thank you from me personally and from the Order of Australia Association Victoria Branch committee for the support received from members during 2022, please stay safe.

We look forward to your ongoing support in 2023.

Dr Helene Bender AM
Chair OAA VIC Branch
Current at February 3, 2023