



Welcome from VIC Branch Chair

Welcome to autumn, enjoy the autumnal colours in the gardens and parklands when you are out and about. Thank you to our members who attended their Regional Group Annual General Meeting and related event linked to the AGM.

This edition of the VIC Branch e-Newsletter includes upcoming VIC Branch and Regional Groups events and news and coverage of our Inspiring Australians Oration late February and Annual General Meeting and lunch last month.

Working Together-Building the Future is the theme for the **2023 national conference** being held in Geelong **May 18-21**. Registration closes at 5.00pm on Tuesday May 2.

For the conference program and booking link and accommodation options please refer to <https://theorderofaustralia.asn.au/national-conference-2023/>



Order of Australia 2023 Australia Day Investitures will be held at Government House Victoria on Monday April 3, Tuesday April 4 and Thursday April 6, 2023.

These will be the last Order of Australia Investitures the Governor of Victoria, the Honourable Linda Dessau AC CVO will conduct, her term as Governor will end on June 30, 2023.

On behalf of the Association we thank Our Patron the Governor of Victoria for her engagement with the Victorian community.

On 1 July 2015, the Honourable Linda Dessau AC was sworn in as Victoria's 29th Governor, the first female in the role.

In 2017 the Governor was made a Companion of the Order of Australia for "eminent service to the people of Victoria through leadership roles in the judiciary, to the advancement of economic ties and business relationships, and as a supporter of charitable, sporting and arts organisations".

Thank you to Order of Australia recipients who have joined the Association this year.

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

Upcoming Victoria Branch Events 2023

Refer to page 10 and 11 for further information regarding Victoria Branch upcoming events

Wednesday July 5 Virtual event via ZOOM

Sunday August 6 Melbourne Winter Masterpieces at National Gallery Victoria

Wednesday October 4 Thank You Reception for members who join the Association during 2023

Thursday November 23 End of Year Dinner

Upcoming Regional Group Events 2023

Refer to page 12 for further information regarding Regional Group upcoming events and News

Eastern Suburbs Regional Group

Online webinars through 2023, with a wide range of speakers

Thursday May 11

Gippsland Regional Group

Sunday April 30 - Luncheon

North Central Suburbs Regional Group

Monthly ZOOM sessions, third Thursday of each month commencing at 5:30pm

Wednesday April 19

North East Victoria and Goulburn Valley Regional Group

Sunday June 25 – Luncheon

Refer to <https://theorderofaustralia.asn.au/vic/upcoming-events/> for further details regarding VIC Branch and Regional Group events.



VIC Branch Oration delivered by Chris Leptos AO

The sixth OAA VIC Branch Inspiring Australians Oration was delivered by Chris Leptos AO in the Supper Room at the Melbourne Town Hall to members, guests and students on Tuesday February 28, 2023

VIC Branch Membership Secretary and Interim Secretary Fred Harrington OAM was the MC acknowledging the Traditional Owners of country, and warmly welcomed VIPS, members and guests including students from Strathcona Girl's Grammar and Shelford Girl's Grammar. Fred also thanked the string quartet from Shelford Girl's Grammar for the background music before the formalities commenced.



After the National Anthem Helene Bender AM VIC Branch Chair introduced **Chris Leptos AO**.

Queen's Birthday 2000 Chris Leptos was a Member of the Order of Australia recipient for service to business, particularly through the promotion of sustainable development and environmental reporting in industry, and to the community.

Queen's Birthday 2022 Chris was an Officer of the Order of Australia recipient, elevated from AM to AO for distinguished service to the not-for-profit sector through leadership and philanthropic support, to the public sector, and to education.

Chris has strong connections with the University of Melbourne Business and Economics Faculty including a current. Board Member; he is the Initiator and Supporter of 1,000 Indigenous Business Leaders program with the aim to nurture and develop 1,000 Indigenous business leaders over 10 years across Australia.

Chris is an experienced company director, since 2018 he has been the National Chairman and President of the Heart Foundation, since 2005 the Governor of The Smith Family and Incoming Chair of Summer Foundation, their focus is stopping young people with a disability from being forced into residential aged care, by helping them access the support needed to be in control of where, how and with whom they live.

Chris has undertaken a number of sensitive government reform processes including a recent independent review of social and affordable housing. In 2021 he was appointed as the Independent Reviewer for the Food and Grocery Code under the Competition and Consumer Act.

This is a brief summary of the commitment Chris is making to the business and not-for-profit sectors; he certainly brings a wealth of past and current experience to any table.

During the Oration Chris mentioned the most inspiring words he heard in his youth – and they still put a knot in his stomach when he thinks of those words today – uttered by a woman who he never met. However, his mother heard those words when she was twelve years old, and she retold the story many times of how she was transfixed by those words.

VIC Branch Oration delivered by Chris Leptos AO

It was 1939, London, war had broken out, and people around the world were bracing for the excruciating horror that would soon arrive.

The full wrath of the Nazi war machine was about to descend on London and the UK.

School children of all ages – just like the school children at the Oration – were taken out of school, and out of their homes, and sent to live with strangers in the British countryside, where they would be safer, hopefully, from the Nazi bombing.

It was a matter of only time before Britain was humiliated – it might take weeks or months – but everyone knew that Britain would fall, eventually. Everyone knew, except the British public. A number of surveys were done in those days about the mood of the British public. Amazingly, the British public had an unwavering belief in their ability to prevail.

Today we use the term 'Dunkirk Spirit' to refer to a stoic, and perhaps almost cheerful attitude against hopeless odds.

If you have never read the story of the Dunkirk evacuation – it is a story that will raise your spirits and put a spring in your step. That story is a great antidote for anyone feeling they are up against long odds and difficult challenges.

So, back to the children who were packed off to the countryside.

The parents of those children stayed behind in London, and in other big cities like Bristol, Glasgow, Leeds, Coventry, etc, and they braced for the worst – because to leave, was to surrender their land and their connection to it.



The Royal family, and specifically the Queen who was wife of King George VI and her daughters, would need to be evacuated – taken far away – probably to Canada.

The reasoning was that the Royal family must

continue because it would be a symbol of defiance once the Nazis took control of the United Kingdom – even if it was from Canada.

It would be the beginning of an underground government in exile perhaps.

Arrangements were being made hastily to evacuate the Queen and her daughters. One of her daughters, by the way, was their heir to the throne. But that's another story. Anyway, the Queen was rather feisty, I'm told, but rather softly spoken.

She quietly uttered a few short sentences that shocked and inspired people around the world. Here's what she said ...

The children won't go without me.

I won't leave the King.

And the King will never leave.

They never did leave Britain, nor did they leave London. They never went to the countryside.

Those words inspired a nation.

VIC Branch Oration delivered by Chris Leptos AO

More than a nation, they inspired a 12 year old girl living in Cyprus at the time – a young girl who became my mother.

It is only recently that I have heard anything that has roused me, and inspired me, more than those 17 words from the Queen, 84 years ago.

It was exactly one year ago, yesterday February 27, when President Volodymyr Zelensky stood in Kyiv and said the following ...

We will be defending our country, because our weapon is truth, and our truth is that this is our land, our country, our children, and we will defend all of this.

When those words were spoken most of the world didn't believe him.

At that same time as President Zelensky was uttering those words, and dodging bombs and avoiding teams that had been sent to assassinate him and his family, US intelligence agencies were briefing President Biden that Ukraine would fall within two weeks.

President Biden was told that President Zelensky would be killed or taken prisoner if he wasn't evacuated immediately.

Just like the royal family in 1939, President Zelensky and his wife were defiant. Perhaps unrealistically so.

They steeled themselves for what would inevitably be a brutal and awful attack on their people, and their community, and their land.

President Zelensky often says he was inspired by Winston Churchill, and he recently visited the War Rooms in London.

He sat in the same chair that Churchill used when he was facing overwhelming odds from the Nazis.

The school children at this Oration will be asked by their grandchildren where they were, what were they doing, when President Zelensky spoke those defiant, inspiring words

So while there are many Australians who I admire and who inspire me, for this Oration, and for this year past, I will nominate only one person, a Ukrainian, President Zelensky, as the person who has inspired me, and inspired many, many other Australians.

He is a man I have never met, who lives in a bomb shelter 15,000 km from here.

He has shown me that community and culture and language are deeply connected to the land.

He has proven to me the power of quiet humility.

He has taught me that before you can develop resilience, you need to understand that there is a chance you will be knocked down. He has motivated me to rekindle and admire the Dunkirk Spirit.

I suspect that in another 84 years we will still be celebrating those words from President Zelensky, and we will invoke Zelensky's now famous finish to all of his appearances – "**Slava Ukraini**" – with the same reverence that we have for the Dunkirk Spirit.

I probably won't be here in 84 years to confirm if my prediction is correct, but many of the school children here today might be – if life expectancy continues to improve the way it has over the past 50 years.

VIC Branch Oration delivered by Chris Leptos AO

And I would like to invite the Order of Australia Association, which I'm sure will be here in 84 years, to dedicate an Oration in honour of those defiant, inspiring words from the Queen in 1939, and President Zelensky in 2022.

And to invite the school children who are here today to join that celebration in 84 years' time.

I will conclude by expressing my heartfelt best wishes, to the President of the Ukraine, to his wife and two children, and to the Ukrainian people.

May you soon be able to enjoy your culture, your community, your language and your land, in peace.

A student (**Shreya**) from Strathcona Girl's Grammar wrote a summary of her experience at the Inspiring Australia Oration.

"I and a few other girls were lucky enough to be invited to the Order of Australia Association 2023 Inspiring Australians Oration held on Tuesday the 28th of February.

We all made our way to the Melbourne Town Hall to attend the event and soon learnt more information about what an Oration really was.

The oration was delivered by Chris Leptos AO who delivered a warm and inspiring speech focusing on the importance on a community's connection to their land. He mentioned many interesting and eye-opening stories and facts which were all a pleasure to hear.

We then heard from the 2013 OAA foundation scholarship recipient Tom Crowhurst who shared insight of his motivating journey prior to and post receiving his scholarship leaving us with many pieces of advice surrounding the ideas of being bold and taking any opportunity that comes your way.

Lastly we were lucky to hear from and meet Paul Wheelton AM who is a very special friend of Strathcona (the Wheelton Knowledge Exchange, is named after him!).

The formal part of the ceremony then ended and we were able to chat with a few of those who attended and hear about their backgrounds and journeys and even get a few photos.

Overall this was a very educational and inspiring experience that we were very fortunate to be a part of!"



Photo: Paul Wheelton AM, Angela Wheelton OAM, Tom Crowhurst, Chris Leptos AO, staff and students from Strathcona Girl's Grammar.

Student Shreya is bottom left in the photo

VIC Branch Oration delivered by Chris Leptos AO

At the Oration we were fortunate to have with us the members who were and still are an integral part of the 2013 Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholarship.

Scholarship donor Hugh Morgan AC, the scholarship recipient Tom Crowhurst and his two Mentors Chris Leptos AO and COL John Wertheimer AM

Tom Crowhurst updated members, guests and students on the opportunities the scholarship has provided him. Tom was studying Commerce Economics, Finance and Engineering Mechanical at the University of Melbourne where he was named on the Dean's Honours List in 2011 and 2012 and helped refugee Secondary students with their studies at Trinity College.

Tom has an outstanding academic record, and proven leadership capabilities in the community and on the sporting fields.

Tom has been an Associate at Goldman Sachs for four years, then at BGH Capital for a couple and now an Investment Analyst at L1 Capital Catalyst Fund, a global investment manager with offices in Melbourne, Sydney, Miami and London that manages money for a range of clients including large superannuation funds, pension funds, asset consultants, financial planning groups, family offices, high net worth individuals and retail investors.

Donations to the Order of Australia Association Foundation scholarship program is money well spent.

Which medal to wear when?



Day Functions

The full-size insignia (Main Piece) is generally worn at day functions where decorations have been prescribed by the event, for example Anzac Day, Remembrance Day ceremonies or special services such as a State Funeral, Memorial or Thanksgiving Service.

Evening Functions

At events such as evening receptions and dinners where decorations have been prescribed, the miniature insignia is generally worn. The main exception to this is Neck Decorations (AC and AO), which are worn in full-size.

Every day Wear

A lapel pin may be worn on civilian clothes at any time. Only one badge should be worn at a given time and not when other insignia pieces are worn.

VIC Branch Annual Lunch held Tuesday March 28, 2023

Associate Professor Patrick Mahar OAM – Inspiring medical innovation in the treatment of burns

By Dr. Teresa De Fazio OAM – OAA VIC Branch committee member

Associate Professor Patrick Mahar OAM is a specialist in adult and paediatric dermatology who has undertaken ground breaking medical work, in particular, in the area of the treatment of burns.

Assoc. Prof. Mahar presented on his work at the Victorian Branch Annual Lunch held in the William Angliss Restaurant on Tuesday March 28 following the Annual General Meeting.

The presentation provided an opportunity for guests to gain insights into his complex medical work which focuses on the innovative use of laser therapy in the treatment of severe and often debilitating burns in adults and children.

The doctor's seminal work in the field was recognised in 2014 when he was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for his services to medicine, particularly in the fields of burns research and patient safety.

Assoc. Prof. Mahar developed an approach to treat paediatric burns seeking advice and support from a range of specialist areas in the Alfred Hospital and Royal Children's hospital to ensure best practice. He also travelled to Miami, with the assistance of Eddington Scholarship, to visit Dr. Jill Waibel, a world-recognised leader in dermatologic surgery, of the Miami Laser and Dermatology. The visit was fundamental to gaining knowledge and creating contacts required to formulate a service dedicated to burns treatment in Australia.

Assoc. Prof. Mahar explained the challenging nature of burn scars. Characteristics of serious burns include one or more of the following: redness, thickness, pigmentation, stiffness, and, functional deficits. These can prove to be debilitating for the patient, especially in children who are still growing.

Assoc. Prof. Mahar's technique for treatment improves the healing process. The use of two different lasers aims to target and stimulates haemoglobin (blood) to activate recovery, also, the regensis of skin – often, resulting in a 30 per cent improvement in scarring. He stepped the guests through some photographic examples of burns and subsequent treatment. He explained how the use of specialised lasers is critical in terms of reducing scarring, improving cosmetic appearance, and minimising psychological impact of living with burns, "while the scars may not be eliminated, the results often mean substantial improvement...every chance of improvement you take."

Assoc. Prof. Mahar acknowledged the professionalism of the extended team in the intensive work around the treatment of burn patients, which included psychologists, physiotherapists, nurses and other specialist staff.

As a young recipient of the Order of Australia, at only 27 years of age, Assoc. Prof. Mahar, now 36 years of age, is an inspiring community member.

The Victoria Branch also thanked Barb Thomas OAM Chair of the North East Victoria & Goulburn Valley Regional Group for MCing the annual lunch and congratulated the NRV&GV Regional Group on their 30th anniversary lunch on Sunday March 26.in Benalla

It was pleasing to have Ralph Butcher OAM with us again this year and a special thanks to Terry Black OAM who assists Ralph in booking to attend OAA events, provides transport and also keeps a watchful eye on him; Ralph is 104 turning 105 in June.

Our Annual Lunch gave William Angliss Restaurant front of house students and back of house cookery students function experience.

VIC Branch Annual Lunch held Tuesday March 28, 2023

Photo Front of House William Angliss Restaurant students



Photo Helene Bender AM OAA VIC Branch Chair and speaker Assoc Professor Patrick Mahar OAM



Photo Table 5 – Host Owen Hegarty OAM



Photo Back of House William Angliss Restaurant cookery students

VIC Branch Events

Wednesday July 5: 5.30pm VIRTUAL event open to members and guests at no cost. Speaker Dr Jenny Gray CEO Zoos Victoria Invitation will be emailed to members early May 2023. There is no cost to attend the VIRTUAL event; it is an opportunity for Victoria Branch members to stay connected.
Please Save the Date

Sunday August 6: Melbourne Winter Masterpieces at National Gallery Victoria
9.30am to 10.00am Registration and collection of Exhibition ticket/s – enter via the North Entrance next to the Arts Centre Melbourne forecourt, not via the front entrance with the water wall
10:00am -10:45am Introductory Talk
11:00am The Pierre Bonnard: Designed by India Mahdavi Exhibition at your own pace – allow one hour
Refer to page 11 for invitation and booking details

Wednesday October 4: 1.00pm at Alex Theatre St Kilda within walking distance of rail and tram services
VIC Branch Reception to welcome January and June recipients who join the Association in 2023; the reception is to say thank you.

Thursday November 23: 6.15pm End of Year Dinner for members and guests at William Angliss Restaurant with speaker Natalie O'Brien AM.



2023 OAA Vic Branch committee

Chair – Helene Bender AM

Deputy Chair – Trevor Clark OAM

Branch Nominated Director –William Lye OAM KC

Secretary – Fred Harrington OAM (Interim)

Treasurer – Helene Bender AM (Interim)

Events Chair – Christina Despoteris OAM

Minute Secretary – Barbara Thomas OAM

VIC Regional Group Coordinator – Barb Brook OAM

Editor - *The Order* national magazine and e-Newsletter Helene Bender AM

Committee:
Margaret Attley OAM

Teresa De Fazio OAM



Pierre Bonnard: Designed by India Mahdavi Invitation
Order of Australia Association members and guests
Sunday August 6, 2023
National Gallery of Victoria - 180 St Kilda Road, Melbourne

Pierre Bonnard is one of the most beloved painters of the 20th century, celebrated for his use of colour to convey an exquisite sense of emotion. His close friend Henri Matisse declared that Bonnard was 'a great painter, for today and definitely also for the future'.

The Pierre Bonnard Exhibition features more than 100 works by the celebrated French artist, spanning the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. Paintings, drawings, photographs, folding screens and early cinema will bring modern France to life with startling beauty and vivid colour.



Cost: \$44 per person incl.GST covers the Introductory Talk and Exhibition

9.30am to 10.00am Registration and collection of Exhibition ticket/s – enter via the North Entrance next to the Arts Centre Melbourne forecourt, not via the front entrance with the water wall

10:00am -10:45am Introductory Talk

11:00am The *Pierre Bonnard: Designed by India Mahdavi* Exhibition at your own pace – allow one hour

Note: Large OA medals may be worn for this event

Lunch is not included; there are café options in NGV, next door at Arts Centre Melbourne or Southbank next to Hamer Hall. If staying in the arts & cultural precinct recommend you make a booking for lunch.

Bookings: Please book no later than **Tuesday July 25, 2023**

All Bookings are to be made through TryBooking at: <https://www.trybooking.com/CHIOV>

After you have booked you will receive an email message confirming your TryBooking.



Enquires with bookings please contact
VIC Branch Chair Events Christina Despoteris OAM Mobile: 0426 682 682

Regional Group News including events

Eastern Suburbs Regional Group

The Eastern Suburbs Regional Group will continue its popular program of online webinars through 2023, with a wide range of speakers.

All webinars are open to all members and guests.

To book contact ESRG Chairperson, Geoffrey Grinton OAM

VicEasternSubsRG@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Thursday May 11 at 5.30pm Best known for the 'There's a Hippopotamus on our Roof Eating Cake' (1980) series adapted for screen and stage, Hazel Edwards OAM writes across genres, media and age groups. Coping successfully with being different, cultural diversity and social justice using humour are common themes. In this webinar Hazel will talk about the physical and intellectual risks of being a long-term author with a family and a life.

Thursday July 13 at 5:30pm Janet McCalman AC, is Emeritus Redmond Barry Distinguished Professor at the University of Melbourne. She is the author of four award-winning books about Australian life: Struggletown, Journeyings, Sex and Suffering, and most recently Vandemonians: the repressed history of colonial Australia. Her subject in this webinar will start from the basis that Convicts and the First AIF have much in common: young people snatched by 'history' to undergo a traumatic experience. How much did penal servitude in Van Diemen's Land and service in World War 1 affect the lives and health of those who went through those ordeals? Or were there other factors, starting in childhood that determined how resilient they were and whether they could recover in later life? Can history help us to do better in the future?

Thursday September 14 at 5.30pm Dr Neil Roy AM was a consultant paediatrician at the Women's Hospital from 1975 to 2007, and a key contributor to the development of NETS, the Newborn Emergency Transport Service, designed originally to safely bring newborns needing specialist care to the Women's Hospital.

Thursday November 9 at 5:30pm Jenny Graves AC is a renowned Australian Geneticist, a Distinguished Professor within the La Trobe University's Institute for Molecular Science. Her wide research interests have included mapping the genome of Australian marsupials, and she is particularly well known for her theories of the origin and evolution of human sex chromosomes and sex determining genes. Her many awards include the Prime Minister's Prize for Science.

Blackburn Lake Sanctuary visit

The Eastern Suburbs Regional Group recently held a member get together at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary. This was the first in-person meeting of members since COVID, and was a trial to ascertain members interest in future events of this type.

Blackburn Lake Sanctuary is a bushland reserve comprising approximately 26 hectares with a lake formed by the damming of an upper tributary of Gardiner's Creek. The Sanctuary is an important resource for Melbourne's eastern region for its special environmental and educational values. By sustaining the indigenous flora, the Sanctuary provides a safe habitat for fauna, as well as allowing a range of leisure activities for the local community.

It was deemed to be a great place for our first face-to-face meeting in three years.

Although a picnic at noon in the natural bushland setting had been planned to give members a chance to chat and enjoy the ambiance and wonderful lake surrounds and sounds, inclement weather meant this was not possible. However, by 2pm the skies had lightened and the weather was pleasant, with no wind. Those members brave enough to attempt the walk to the Visitors Centre on the gravelled paths thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon.

Eastern Suburbs Regional Group

Three members of the Advisory Committee explained the Lake Sanctuary.

Anne Payne, OAM began by discussing the sanctuary lake history and its value to the community.



Elaine Boucher followed by explaining the Parks and Natural Environment Education Program, a free program which caters for approximately 2000 users each year, ranging from the local community of Whitehorse residents, school and pre-school groups, children and families, tertiary students, and visitors from Australia-wide and overseas. The service is staffed by volunteers and is now led by two part time Environment Education officers appointed by the City of Whitehorse.

Su Dempsey then informed the group of the lake's Water Watch and anti-pollution programs and its Litter Project research grant and follow up actions.

The talks were followed by afternoon tea on the veranda. Those who attended really enjoyed the day, so it is planned to run another face-to-face event later this year, while still continuing the very successful zoom speaker program.

Glenys Grant OAM writer of article

2023 Annual General Meeting Office Bearers Eastern Suburbs Regional Group

Chair Geoffrey Grinton OAM
Treasurer Graeme Dodd OAM
Committee Alan Collier OAM
 Nicole Everard OAM
 Glenys Grant OAM
 Margaret Hammon OAM
 Terry O'Callaghan AM

Gippsland Regional Group

GIPPSLAND REGIONAL GROUP 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND HIGH TEA

About 30 members and guests met at Traralgon's Gippsland Rotary Centenary House for the Gippsland Regional Group's Annual General Meeting on Sunday 19th March.

The meeting facilitated the election of a Committee to take the Regional Group through 2023 and, at the same time, provided the opportunity to formally farewell several long serving members who have elected to stand down from the committee and allow some new faces to join.

A seven person Committee, consisting of Lorraine Bartling OAM, Anne Macarthur AM, Alex Arbuthnot AM, Doug Caulfield OAM RFD, Neil Terrill OAM, David Tulloch OAM and Ian Ewart OAM, OStJ was elected and convened on Friday 31st March to elect Office Bearers for 2023. Chair Doug Caulfield OAM RFD, Secretary Anne Macarthur AM, Treasurer Ian Ewart OAM.

Gippsland Regional Group

Those farewelled on the day were, Beth Delzoppo OAM, David Packham OAM, Bill Bodman OAM and Helen Holley who, for many years has volunteered to support the Regional Group by providing invaluable secretarial support to the Committee as well as taking the lead in organising luncheons and other Regional Group activities.

At the conclusion of the formalities a presentation of Certificates of Appreciation was carried out by the Chair (Lorraine Bartling OAM) which was followed by a High Tea provided by the volunteer staff of Centenary House, which was enjoyed by all.

The next scheduled activity for the group is a luncheon at Fish Creek in South Gippsland to be held on **Sunday 30th April**.

Gippsland Rotary Centenary House (GRCH) is a community-based not-for-profit accommodation facility, for patients and their families who are attending the Gippsland Cancer Care Centre and Latrobe Regional Hospital (LRH). Gippsland Rotary Centenary House is registered with Consumer Affairs Victoria as an Incorporated Association and as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC) with tax deductible status. The philosophy is to provide affordable, comfortable, supportive and secure accommodation so that the stress of travelling and treatment is minimised.

The facility comprises thirty large 'motel style' en suite units, two with full disabled access bathrooms. Communal kitchens, dining areas and lounges, 'Quiet Room' for family consultation and privacy, reading area, secure playground and community room are also part of the complex.

This project was initiated by Gippsland Rotary Clubs to mark the Centenary of Rotary International, and has attracted broad community support and representation throughout Gippsland. Funds have been raised through community fundraising, applications to philanthropic trusts, sponsorship and donations in kind.



Photo
Certificates of Appreciation recipients (from right to left), David Packham OAM, Helen Holley (Assistant Secretary), Gippsland Regional Group Chair Lorraine Bartling OAM, Beth Delzoppo OAM and Bill Bodman OAM

Melbourne Central Regional Group

At the Melbourne Central Regional Group luncheon on Tuesday March 21 following the Regional Group Annual General Meeting at Kooyong Lawn Tennis Club; members and guests were interested in the presentation by Professor Michael Berk, Director Institute of Mental and Physical Health and Clinical Translation (IMPACT).

IMPACT began in December 2019 with an ambition to improve the quality of life for sufferers of mental health conditions and chronic diseases. By asking important questions about the connection between physical and mental health, such as, 'How does what we eat affects our mood?' and repurposing existing drugs, IMPACT's innovative diagnostics and treatments are at the forefront of new mental health treatments.

Michael is among the top mental researches in the world driven by curiosity and a fierce commitment to improve global understanding and treatment of mental health disorders.

He spoke about the enormity of the problem and the lack of funding for research; he also spoke about the progress being made on many fronts including "food and mood" and other therapies.

Michael answered numerous questions, including the effect of the lack of human interaction.

Melbourne Central Regional Group is planning Networking evenings at:-
The recently opened Hilton Hotel in the Melbourne CBD; those attending will learn about the interesting history of the site.

The residence of the British Consul - General
Both at dates to be confirmed during the year
Notices will be sent out in due course, also for luncheons later in the year.

2023 Office Bearers Melbourne Central Regional Group

Chair	Trevor Clark OAM
Secretary	Jed Macartney OAM
Treasurer	Peter Norman OAM
Committee	Meg Davoren-Honey OAM

North Central Suburbs Regional Group

ZOOM Sessions

Monthly ZOOM sessions, with a guest speaker, will continue to be held on the third Thursday of each month commencing at 5:30pm.

Our speaker for **20th April** 2023 session will be Professor Peter Revill AM.

His topic will be: The International Coalition to Eliminate Hepatitis B (ICE-HBV) – a story of global collaboration. Chronic Hepatitis B disease caused by infection with hepatitis B virus (HBV) affects 300 million people worldwide, including 240,000 Australians, resulting in almost 1 million deaths worldwide each year from liver disease, including liver cancer.

Although there is an effective preventative vaccine, and suppressive antiviral therapy, there is no cure.

In 2016, Peter and colleagues established the International Coalition to Eliminate Hepatitis B (ICE-HBV), to harmonise global efforts to fast-track a cure for chronic HBV disease.

Peter's presentation will describe the journey leading to the formation of ICE-HBV, and update us on progress towards developing a cure.

Members of all Regional Groups are welcome to join this ZOOM session. Bookings close at 5:00pm on Wednesday 19th April 2023. Bookings can be made through Fred Harrington OAM at: fred.harrington@gravity.net.au

There **will not be** a ZOOM session on 19th May due to the OAA National Convention commencing in Geelong that day.

North Central Suburbs Regional Group

Seasonal Lunches

Please note the change of dates for the **June and September** lunches.

Winter Seasonal Lunch – Wednesday 14th June commencing at 11:45 am at the Sycamore Tree café, Heidelberg

Yarra Valley Lunch – Sunday 13th August commencing at 12 Noon at the Yering Meadows Golf Club Café. This event will also include the reception for both Australia Day and June Holiday Honours recipients

Spring Seasonal Lunch – Wednesday 13th September commencing at 11:45 am at the Sycamore Tree café

Please note for all events members are welcome to bring a partner/guest.

Annual General Meeting and Lunch

Thank you to all those members and guests who were able to attend the AGM followed by the Autumn Seasonal Lunch.

It was great to be back at the Sycamore Tree Café and we thank the team there for their support and welcome on the day.

The draft minutes of the AGM have been distributed to members however the following are a couple of highlights from the events.

New Committee Members

We welcome Rosemary Boyd OAM who has taken on the position of Deputy Chair of the group and Leighton Boyd AM who has taken on a committee role.

Certificates of Appreciation

The AGM also provided the opportunity to acknowledge the years of membership of OAA of two of our members, David Jones AM for 35 years of membership and Bill Noonan OAM for 15 years of membership.

Photo

Fred Harrington OAM NCSRG Chair and David Jones AM



North East & Goulburn Valley Regional Group

On Sunday 26th March 2023 at Lakeside Community Centre, Benalla, 90 members and guests of the NEGV Group gathered for a luncheon to mark the occasion of 30 years since formation. Across those 30 years an estimated 600 locals have received Order of Australia awards either on Australia Day or the Queen's Birthday.

The Governor General, His Excellency The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (RETD), the patron of the Order of Austral Association, sent a message of congratulations and commended the Regional Group for its work in promoting the nomination of its regional citizens to receive recognition under Australia's Awards system.

The Governor of Victoria, The Hon. Linda Dessau AC, also requested that her congratulations be recorded.

The NEGV Group was established in May 1993 as part of the Victorian Branch of the Association. The establishment of the Group followed the annual picnic of the Victorian Branch of the Association held at Brown Brothers Milawa held in March that year. John Brown AM (snr) made the winery available for the picnic and provided vintage wines.

North East & Goulburn Valley Regional Group

On May 16th 1993, a luncheon and the inaugural meeting was held at Rafferty's restaurant in Benalla where Sir Zelman Cowan, a former Governor General and President of the Association was the guest speaker. John Brown (snr) AM (Milawa) was elected Chairman, and the committee members were John Sleigh OAM (Nagambie), Margot Ballard OAM (Wangaratta) Brian Jasper OAM (Rutherglen) and Kevin Riordan OAM (Shepparton). The region covered by the Group includes 12 local government municipalities of the North East and the Goulburn Valley.

The guest speakers at the 30th anniversary luncheon were John Brown AO (the son of John Brown AM) and Pam Robinson AM. Pam, who was awarded an OAM in 1990, attended the inaugural meeting and luncheon in May 1993 and as an inaugural member took on the request of the Chairman to be support to the Secretary as required.

Barbara Thomas OAM, Chair of the North East Goulburn Valley Group, who like John Brown AO has a close family connection with the Group. Barbara's father, Dr Frederick Roy Phillips OAM, was an inaugural member of the Group and almost certainly attended the formation meeting.

Also in attendance was Mrs Margot Colson OAM who is an inaugural member and present at the first lunch.

The support and generosity of the Brown family for the Regional Group continues with John Brown AO remaining very active in its activities. On this occasion John donated a glass of Brown



Brothers Prosecco for all in attendance as well as lucky door prize of bottle of 1993 Brown Brothers Ruby Cabernet. This was won by member Lorna Morris OAM who was delighted to be the new owner.

Thank you to Vic Branch Chair Dr Helene Bender AM and Victorian Regional Coordinator, Barb Brook OAM for travelling to Benalla to attend the lunch.

A beautiful 30th anniversary cake was one of the highlights of the event with members and guests enjoying this as dessert with mixed berries and cream.

Rolling photos of the last 30 years played in the background bringing back fond memories to many who attended. These were organized by John Brown AO.

Thank you to the organizing committee Marg Attley OAM, Mary Lou Davis OAM, John Brown AO and Barb Thomas OAM for all their work in preparing for this special event.

Photo

Barb Thomas OAM North East & Goulburn Valley Regional Group Chair with the framed message from the Governor-General

Five of our region's 2023 Australia Day recipients attended the lunch and we congratulate them on their award

June Brown OAM-for service to the creative arts

Edward Davis OAM -for service to the community of Mooroopna

Julie de Hennin OAM for service to the community of Northern Victoria

Warren Garrett OAM-for service to the community of the Wangaratta region

Judith Hanlon OAM-for service to the communities of Euroa and Shepparton



Photo John Brown AO cutting the 30th anniversary cake

Upcoming event

Sunday June 25 at Yarrowonga Mulwala Golf Club

Guest speaker Mr Tony Rinaud AM. Tony is a world-renowned agronomist and we are most fortunate to have him in Australia at this time.

2023 Annual General Meeting Office Bearers North East & Goulburn Valley Regional Group

Chair Barbara Thomas OAM

Deputy Chair Don Kilgour OAM

Secretary Margaret Attley OAM

Treasurer Graham Kerr OAM

Committee:

Sue Campbell OAM

Mary-Lou Davis OAM

Peter Ryan AM

Ron Webb OAM

South Central Suburbs Regional Group

The AGM for the Regional Group was held on Thursday 23rd of March in the Stables Room at the Marine Hotel Brighton, thankfully it was scheduled to start after a sudden downpour had flooded parts of the Melbourne suburbs earlier in the morning.

Following his welcome, apologies and the recognition of Past Chairman of the Group in Geoff Oscar AM, Ian Perdriau AM, Roger Wilson OAM and Ross Newton OAM Chairman Graeme Woolacott OAM acknowledged the Victoria Branch Regional Group Coordinator Barb Brook OAM. Following that he presented to Roy Boyd OAM a Certificate commemorating his 15 years of membership in the Order of Australia Association.

Then the Order of Business was followed with nothing untoward happening during the course of the procedures and the AGM went along smoothly with the following elected to the Management Committee for the following year:

Chairman	Jill Page OAM (photo right)
Vice Chairman	Lesley McGurgan OAM
Treasurer	Alan Samuels OAM JP
Secretary	Graeme Woolacott OAM
Minute Secretary	Cheryl Threadgold OAM
Membership Chairman	Alan Rae OAM
Venue Facilitator	Roger Wilson OAM
Newsletter Editor	Kathy Kaplan OAM
Committee	Richard Rozen OAM
Committee	Joanna Newton OAM



Following the declaration by the Returning Officer Ross Newton OAM the new Chairman Jill Page OAM thanked the outgoing Chairman Graeme Woolacott OAM for his leadership over the past three years and noted that during the past year he had carried three roles, Chairman, Secretary and Newsletter Editor.



Closing the meeting Secretary Graeme Woolacott OAM introduced the Guest Speaker Lesley McGurgan OAM. Lesley had replaced the advertised speaker Patricia Burke OAM who had to withdraw at the last minute because of a family member's medical treatment.

Lesley had the audience intrigued with all that she has accomplished within the community, she is a Life Member of many Associations, she spoke of her Council and Mayoral times in local Government and more specifically [for this writer] the time that she had spent in the R.A.N. around the time of the HMAS Melbourne and HMAS Voyager disaster.

Lesley was thanked by the Secretary and given a gift in appreciation for her talk. A very nice convivial meal and chatter over a relaxed period of time ended the meeting.

Western Suburbs Regional Group

The Western Suburbs Regional Group held its first meeting for the year on 16 March at the Altona Sports Club, in conjunction with its AGM. For the first time since its inception, the position of Chair was contested, with two candidates putting their hats in the ring.

The result of the voting is given below along with the names of the incoming committee. That is a 'first' too, as for the first time we have a 'gender-neutral' committee, with three women and three men taking on the job.

Following the AGM and lunch, members present were regaled with a talk from Malcolm Peacock AM, who received his honour in 2001 "for service to the egg industry, to the community through health, education and social welfare groups, and to local government".

Malcolm talked about the egg and poultry industry, and who could have imagined how many

Western Suburbs Regional Group

surprises we had! Did you know, for example, that Australian chooks provide six BILLION eggs a year?

They don't all end up at the supermarket, of course; some are processed into powdered egg for the food industry.

Most of the eggs that do reach supermarket shelves have never been touched by a human hand, with mechanisation delivering them from the chicken to the check-out.

It was interesting to learn, too, that the push for us to buy free-range eggs is a double-edged sword. Malcolm explained that, when poultry run free, they are vulnerable to diseases brought in by migratory birds that mingle with them and, apart from the harm to the poultry; this is also a threat to the industry itself.

If the public reject eggs from caged birds, then the best option is to look for eggs from barn-raised chooks, since they are free to roam but in a controlled area. Now we can all shop wiser and protect birds and the egg industry.



The Western Suburbs Regional Group's next meeting will be in early June, with details available on the Victoria Branch page of the website when the new committee has finalised them.

2023 Annual General Meeting Office Bearers Western Suburbs Regional Group

Chair June Kane AM
Treasurer John Ravenhall AM
Members with shared portfolios:
Elleni Bereded-Samuel AM
Ian Curtis AM
Terry Heazlewood OAM
Shillar Sabanda OAM

Congratulations William Lye OAM KC

University of Oxford hosted the 20th Annual Oxford International Intellectual Property Law Moot.

This year, 28 teams were invited to compete in the oral rounds after a competitive memorial rounds.



Congratulations to Monash University Monash Law team comprising of Dev Sharma (Team Captain), Jeremy Brown, and Tristan Hocking-Brown for a successful competition. Jeremy Brown was adjudged the best speaker in the Preliminary Rounds. Tristan Hocking-Brown was the joint 2nd best speaker. Monash was declared the best team in the preliminary rounds and the best new team in the competition.

OAA VIC Branch Nominated Director **William Lye OAM KC** was privileged to participate with the team as their coach; he congratulated the law students for their hard work and months of preparation.

Celebrating the Order of Australia investitures – Monday April 3

Dr Teresa De Fazio OAM represented the Order of Australia Association Victoria Branch at the Monday April 3 Order of Australia Investitures, Barb Thomas OAM will represent the VIC Branch on Tuesday April 4 and Helene Bender AM on Thursday April 6, 2023.

The excitement on the day of the Order of Australia investitures is quite palpable. Awardees, their family and friends all gather at Government House in a spirit of good will and respect, knowing that like them, each person has provided a commendable service to the community.

The 3rd April, 2023 was a memorable one for many as they received their Awards on a day of splendid sunshine.

The investiture was the last for Governor of Victoria, the Honourable Linda Dessau AM, as she is almost at the end of her term. The Governor has overseen many investitures, even during the COVID pandemic when special arrangements were made so that the special event could continue.

Amongst the 3rd April awardees were Fred Alale AM for his service to African communities of Australia, Elizabeth Drozd OAM for her service to the Polish and multicultural communities of Australia, and Elizabeth Exintaris OAM, for her services to the community, particularly through music.

The Governor reminded each recipient that the work they had contributed to the community was important and indicative of their personal strong commitment in going above and beyond. She encouraged each to accept the Award as personal recognition for their efforts, and to ensure they took a moment to enjoy the acknowledgement and celebrate it. She reminded awardees that “the community, the country or at an international level was all the better for their contribution”.

The Order of Australia Association acknowledges the support and dedication of the Hon Linda Dessau AC CVO, Governor of Victoria, and Mr Anthony Howard AM KC,

Photo

Elizabeth Drozd OAM,
Teresa De Fazio OAM,
Elizabeth Exintaris OAM, and
Fred Alale AM



The Order of Australia Association News from the Merchandise Shop

Soft and warm – unisex knitted scarf

To keep you warm during autumn and winter– our popular knitted unisex grey scarf.

The soft, comfortable scarf has the OAA crest embroidered on one end and is long enough to wrap around the neck or to be looped and worn as shown.

Cost \$29.00 each plus P&H.



Keeping your bag safe at your side

This OAA-crested bag holder folds up into a neat circle of shiny metal and, when unfolded, allows you to place the crested medallion on a tabletop, allowing the hook to hang down and hold a handle, keeping your bag off the floor and safe at your side.

The bag holder is available in black and comes in a smart box, ideal for gift-giving.

Cos \$10.00 each plus P&H.



Soft Feel Pen

Our latest pen has an elegant soft feel barrel with gunmetal grey trims and comes in a small gift box. The OAA logo has been tastefully printed in white.

Treat yourself, or purchase as a gift for family, friends and guest speakers.

Cost \$7.00 each plus P&H



Vista Travel Charger Kit



The Pure M charger kit combines three products in a handy travel gift set: a USB flash drive, a power bank to charge your phone or tablet on the go, and a USB car charger. These carefully curated products are branded with the OAA crest/name and the top of the gift case is laser engraved.

This smart set is ideal as a gift for guest speakers or family and friends.
Cost \$33.00 each plus P&H

Ties – three options

1. Woven tie aqua stripe and thin white stripe black background
2. Woven tie of with red and gold spots replacing traditional stripes on navy background
3. Woven tie with discreet blue/gold stripe and centred OAA crest, on charcoal grey background.

Cost \$30.00 each plus P&H

Check out the Merchandise Shop Online:

www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/shopping-cart

April is the month of reflection



Passover and Easter

Wednesday April 5 to Sunday April 16, a time for many of our members to reflect and spend time celebrating with family and friends during Passover, Easter and Greek Orthodox Easter. Stay safe and enjoy.



Remember together

Attending the Dawn Service at the Shrine of Remembrance is an experience that everyone should have at least once in their lifetime.

Come together to pause and reflect on the service and sacrifice of generations of Victorians, and all those who suffer the consequences of war.

All are welcome to commemorate on the Shrine Reserve. No tickets or bookings are required.

Key timings Tuesday April 25, 2023

Dawn Service commences 5.30am

Shrine of Remembrance opens 7.00am

ANZAC Day March commences 9.00am

A Commemorative Service will be held at the conclusion of the March

Do you use **Xero** Accounting Software?

The Order of Australia Association Victoria Branch is looking for a member who currently uses the Xero Accounting Software and is interested in joining the OAA VIC Branch committee. Please contact VIC Branch Chair via **M:** 0407 261 951 or **E:** chairvic@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

OAA VIC Branch Regional Group Chairs as at March 31, 2023

Barwon	Wayne Myers OAM
Central Highlands Wimmera	John Burt OAM
Eastern Suburbs	Geoffrey Grinton OAM
Frankston Mornington Peninsula	Heather Bacon AM
Gippsland	Doug Caulfield OAM RFD
Loddon-Campaspe	Steven Lee AM
Mallee	VIC Branch committee
Melbourne Central	Trevor Clark OAM
North Central Suburbs	Fred Harrington OAM
NE & Goulburn Valley	Barbara Thomas OAM
South Central Suburbs	Jill Page OAM
South West Vic	Peter Habersberger AM RFD
Western Suburbs	June Kane AM



The Order of Australia Association Victoria Branch appreciates the ongoing support we receive from our members attending events, buying merchandise and renewing their membership.