



Queensland Branch  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2023**



To be presented by  
Mrs Ronda L. Nix OAM,  
Chairman, Queensland Branch

at

the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting

Monday 18 March 2024

The VC Suite, Level 1, Kedron Wavell Services Club,  
21 Kitty Hawk Drive, Chermside, Brisbane

*To celebrate and promote outstanding Australian citizenship'*

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# 1. Summary

It is with pleasure that I present the forty-third Annual Report of the Queensland Branch of The Order of Australia Association, in my initial year as Chairman.

At a well-attended Queensland Branch Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 20 March 2023, a 'changing of the guard' took place regarding three key positions on the Queensland Branch Committee. In addition to my being elected as the new Chairman, after having held the position of Treasurer for the previous five years, we also elected *Robyn Porter OAM* as our new Secretary and *Dr Dennis Young AM* as our new Treasurer. The Committee also gained two additional new members in *Irene Cayas OAM* and *Kelvin Brown OAM*. The fresh ideas offered by these new Committee members, combined with the wealth of experience of the remaining members on the Committee, provided a good balance of the old and the new.

On behalf of the Queensland Branch, I wish to record most sincere thanks to my predecessor as Chairman *Dr Gary Bacon AM*, whose energy and enthusiasm, during the three years of his term in office, saw the Branch thrive and prosper. Gary has left us in very good shape, and I am pleased to report he is well in his "retirement"

It has been another busy year in 2023 with a great variety of events organized by a hard working Queensland Branch Committee, as well as some worthy functions organized by our regional groups throughout the State.

The Queensland Branch functions held in the Metro (Greater Brisbane) area during the year were as follows -

- the Annual Dinner following the AGM on Monday 20 March at Kedron Wavell Services Club, with *Amanda Dines OAM* as our interesting guest speaker;
- a special Black Tie King's Coronation Dinner to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla, in conjunction with the Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship in Queensland at the Tattersall's Club in Brisbane on Friday 5 May;
- a successful Members' Fellowship Lunch at Wynnum Manly Leagues Club on Wednesday 13 July with former Radio sports broadcaster *John McCoy OAM* as an excellent guest speaker;
- the Annual Secondary Schools Citizenship Awards Presentation at Parliament House, Brisbane on Friday 15 September;
- a Combined Welcome Celebratory Lunch for both the 2023 Australia Day and King's Birthday award recipients at Kedron Wavell Services Club on 11 October; and
- a morning tea and tour of the facilities at the Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy (QCESA) at Whyte Island, Port of Brisbane on Wednesday 29 November.

Fuller details of all of these Queensland Branch functions are provided under their individual headings later in this report, commencing on page 6.

Additionally, our eight regions across Queensland arranged fourteen entertaining and interesting functions throughout the year, comprising ten lunches, one morning tea, a mayoral reception, an informal get together and a dinner. Members enjoyed some fabulous guest speakers at these functions. All fourteen functions will be described in greater detail later in this report commencing on page 15.

An interesting statistic worth recording in this summary is the total number of bookings received for the combined Queensland Branch functions in the metro area and the fourteen regional group functions. The six metro functions (including the OAAQ members attending the King's Coronation Dinner (co-hosted with the Victoria League) totalled 576 bookings and the fourteen regional group functions 656. That is an impressive 1 232 bookings for functions in 2023. Well done to the Queensland Branch Committee and the Regional Conveners on an outstanding collective effort in staging good quality functions with impressive guest numbers.

For the Members' Fellowship Lunch held on Wednesday 13 July, the Branch trialed Humanitix Booking "on line" in lieu of members making payment by eftpos to our bank account. Humanitix is a not-for-profit organisation, notable for operating an event ticketing platform to raise funds for education projects. Humanitix directs 100% of profits from booking fees to a range of education programmes and operates in the US, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The result of the trial was successful with 62 out of 63 guests booking through Humanitix. Accordingly, the system has since been used for all subsequent functions during the year including all regional group events. The great benefit is that it substantially frees up the time of the Treasurer, who previously had to record all eftpos payments for all functions, both Branch and regional, individually. Now the Treasurer only enters one payment from Humanitix.

The following pages provide highlights of the year in greater detail.



## 2. Queensland Branch Committee 2023

The following members of the Association were elected or re-elected under their three year terms to the Branch Committee at the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) on **Monday 20 March 2023**.

- **Chairman:** *Mrs Ronda Nix AM*
- **Deputy Chairman:** *Dr Mick Davis AM ASM* (also appointed by the Committee as Membership Officer)
- **Secretary:** *Mrs Robyn Porter OAM*
- **Treasurer:** *Dr Dennis Young AM*

**Other members of the Committee** (Committee appointed roles in brackets)

- *Mr Kelvin Brown OAM* (Merchandise Officer)
- *Mrs Irene Cayas OAM* (Multicultural and Diversity Officer)
- *Mr Geoff Cowles OAM* ( Awards and Metro Events Coordinator and Queensland Branch Webmaster)
- *Mr Graham Hyde OAM* ( Newsletter Editor)
- *Peter McMurtrie AO KStJ* (Also re-elected at the AGM as Queensland Branch Nominated Director on the National Board)
- *Ms Paula Penfold AM* (Governance and Policy Review Officer )
- *Mr Darryl Seccombe OAM* (Regional Groups Coordinator)
- *Mrs Marjorie Voss OAM* ( Protocol Officer)
- *Dr Carol Cox AM* (Co-opted onto Committee as Assistant Secretary)
- *Mrs Kathy Wooldridge OAM* (Co-opted onto Committee as Assistant Merchandise Officer)



Members of the newly elected Queensland Branch Committee who were present at the AGM on Monday 20 March 2023 – Back row –from L to R – *Dr Carol Cox AM* (co-opted); *Irene Cayas OAM*; *Kelvin Brown OAM*; *Dr Mick Davis AM ASM* (Deputy Chairman); *Darryl Seccombe OAM*; *Dr Dennis Young AM* (Treasurer); *Marjorie Voss OAM*; *Paula Penfold AM*; *Graham Hyde OAM*; *Peter McMurtrie AO KStJ*; Front row – from L-R – *Robyn Porter OAM* (Secretary); *Ronda Nix OAM* (Chairman); *Kathy Wooldridge OAM* (co-opted); and *Geoff Cowles OAM*.

The Committee met on twelve occasions (eleven “face to face” meetings and one meeting using Zoom Technology). Meetings were well organised and a considerable amount of business was transacted to maintain the activities of the Queensland Branch. Everyone contributed positively to the various items debated. I am indebted to the professionalism and efficiency of our new Secretary *Robyn Porter OAM* who has faithfully recorded the minutes of all meetings, as well as assembling all the agendas and associated paperwork for each meeting in a timely manner.

Honours and citations for each Committee member are listed in **Appendix B** on page 35.

In keeping with a tradition introduced by my predecessor *Dr Gary Bacon AM*, I arranged for the Committee members and their partners/spouses and a few invited extra guests to join with me and my husband Keith for an end of year Christmas function at the Geebung RSL Club on 13 December. This was an ideal opportunity to thank the members of the Committee for their loyal and dedicated support to me during a very busy year of activity and to wish everyone the compliments of the Christmas season.



Present at the Christmas Lunch at Geebung RSL are clockwise from bottom left - *Peter McMurtrie AO KStJ*; *Kathy Wooldridge OAM*; *Elaine Davis*; *Dr Mick Davis AM ASM*; *Darryl Seccombe OAM*; *Dr Carol Cox AM*; *Charyl Cowles*; *Geoff Cowles OAM*; *Ralph Davies OAM*; *Peter Wooldridge*; *Graham Hyde OAM*; *Irene Cayas OAM*; *Dina Browne AO*; *Ronda Nix OAM*; *Keith Nix*; and *Dr Dennis Young AM*.  
Absent from photo – *Ross Patching OAM*.

### 3. Queensland Branch Annual Dinner 2023

One hundred and thirty guests attended a most memorable and enjoyable Annual Dinner on **Monday 20 March 2023** in the Blue Pacific Ballroom at Kedron Wavell Services Club in Brisbane. Everyone present enjoyed good fellowship together, in a relaxed and happy atmosphere. The previous 2022 Annual Dinner attracted 114 guests. The increase of 19 over last year was a pleasing outcome.

A well attended Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Queensland Branch preceded the Dinner in the VC Suite. At the AGM, I presented a commemorative plaque of appreciation to retiring Queensland Branch Chairman, *Dr Gary Bacon AM* and a Certificate of Appreciation to *Ross Patching OAM*, who was also retiring from the Committee. These presentations were made at the AGM because both Gary and Ross were unavailable to attend the Annual Dinner.

Our Annual Dinners attract wonderful guest speakers and this year's Dinner was no exception. Our audience had the pleasure of hearing from guest speaker *Dr Amanda Dines OAM*, who received her award in the 2021 Queen's Birthday Honours for service to medicine. Her talk "Plan, What Plan?" included a collection of interesting anecdotes from her multi faceted working career, based on her wide experience in both Medicine and the Royal Australian Air Force. Amanda has been there, done that and has a strong work ethic. She has reached the rank of Air Commodore and was deployed to Iraq and East Timor. Amanda was previously Executive Director Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital; Military Medical Advisor, United Nations; and Senior Visiting Fellow, King's College London in addition to many other interesting work roles.

At the Dinner three outstanding Queensland senior volunteers (*Lorraine Duckwitz* from Aspley, Brisbane; *Pamela Ferguson* from Carindale, Brisbane, and *John Herwig* from Elliott Heads, near Bundaberg) received their Queensland Branch Senior Volunteer Awards from *Michael Rayner AM* representing Blight Rayner Architecture, the award sponsor).



A good crowd in attendance at the Annual Dinner



*Amanda Dines OAM*, the guest speaker, receiving a Certificate of Appreciation from *Darryl Seccombe OAM*



Table 5 at the Annual Dinner – clockwise from bottom left – *Dr Mick Davis AM ASM*; *Elaine Davis*; *Chris Freeman AM*; *Michael Rayner AM* ( Senior Volunteer Awards sponsor); *Amanda Dines OAM* (guest speaker); *Graham Hook*; *Janice Willcocks*; *Bill Willcocks* (Chairman, Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship in Queensland).



Regional Group Conveners attending the AGM and Annual Dinner – L-R – *John Hardy OAM* (Far North Qld); *David Jackson OAM* (Townsville); *Marjorie Voss OAM* (Sunshine Coast); *Carmel Daveson AM* (Whitsunday Isaac Mackay) and *Dr Wal Taylor OAM* (Central Qld).



A good attendance at the AGM held prior to the Annual Dinner



From L-R – Concentrating hard at the commencement of the AGM – Retiring Queensland Branch Chairman *Dr Gary Bacon AM*; retiring Branch Secretary *Dr Carol Cox AM* and retiring Treasurer *Ronda Nix OAM* (right). Ronda subsequently was elected the new Branch Chairman at the AGM.

## 4. Queensland Branch Celebratory Lunch to welcome 2023 Award Recipients

### **Preamble:**

The Queensland Branch usually organizes two Welcome Celebratory Lunches each year for new award recipients in The Order of Australia. One usually happens in May to coincide with Government House, Queensland investitures for Australia Day Award Recipients and the other in September/October to coincide with Government House investitures for the King's Birthday Award Recipients.

Unfortunately, due to a clash with the Investitures in May and the timing of The Order of Australia Association National Conference in Geelong, Victoria, the lunch in May could not take place because too many Queensland Branch Committee members were attending the Conference.

Also, it was not possible to organize the Lunch in September because the investitures were held in the same week as our important Secondary Schools Citizenship Awards Presentation at Parliament House, Brisbane on Friday 15 September. The only date available for the lunch where there were no investitures taking place was the day before, Thursday 14 September. The Queensland Branch Committee considered it too onerous a work load running two major events on consecutive days.

Traditionally, attendance at these lunches has resulted in many new members. It has been noted that attendance at the Welcome Lunches held during the week of the investitures at Government House, when recipients and their families are in Brisbane, results in much higher attendance than when the Recipients' Welcome Lunches are held at other times.

If lunches are not held during the week of investitures, regional recipients would have to travel to Brisbane twice to attend the investiture and the lunch, often from long distances. Many cannot afford either the time or the cost to do this.

I have written to Government House to ask them if they could make some small adjustments to the timing of the investitures in 2024, to allow the Recipients' Welcome Lunches to take place during the week of investitures when recipients are already in town. I await their response with interest.

In lieu of separate lunches for the Australia Day and King's Birthday award recipients, a Combined Welcome Celebratory Lunch was arranged for both groups during October, summarised below -

### ***The Welcome Lunch to celebrate with recipients of awards in both the 2023 Australia Day and King's Birthday Honours – October 2023***

Thirty-five of 223 Queensland recipients of Order of Australia Awards from both the Australia Day and King's Birthday Honours were special guests at the Luncheon on **Wednesday 11 October** in the Blue Pacific Room, Kedron Wavell Services Club, Chermside, Brisbane. In total, 130 guests were present, including recipients, their families and friends and 35 Association members and their guests. Of the 35 award recipients, there were 21 from the King's Birthday Honours and 14 from the Australia Day Honours.



The number of guests and award recipients attending this lunch was very much lower than expected, given that there was such a large cohort of award recipients to draw upon. On the previous occasion when the Queensland Branch organized a combined award recipients' lunch in October 2021, it was a vastly different story with a record 65 out of 205 awardees and a total of 238 guests attending. That impressive result can be attributed in part, to the relaxation of Government Covid 19 restrictions at the time, with everyone desperate to get out and enjoy some social interaction.

Nevertheless, it was a privilege to be at the 2023 event to welcome the thirty-five Order of Australia award recipients in attendance, and to celebrate their fine achievements leading to their awards. Their achievements, from a perusal of their citations, are diverse and varied. Collectively these wonderful Queenslanders have made an outstanding contribution to their communities and to our Nation. Congratulations to all of you.



### **Our fine parade of 2023 award recipients who attended the 11 October 2023 Lunch**

Back rows standing from L to R

*Gail Paratz OAM (King's Birthday); Ken Piva OAM (King's Birthday); Trudy McGowan OAM (King's Birthday) John Tilly OAM (Australia Day); Martin O'Shannessy AM (King's Birthday); Karen Neuendorf OAM (Australia Day); Penelope Hamilton OAM (King's Birthday); Sandra Johnston OAM (King's Birthday); Kevin Wendt OAM (King's Birthday); Maureen Rush OAM (Australia Day); Eleanor Lydon OAM (Australia Day); Stefanie Evans OAM (Australia Day); Jennifer Gregory OAM (King's Birthday); Maureen Lyon OAM (Australia Day); Peter Clark Ryan OAM (King's Birthday); Dr John Cox OAM (Australia Day); Dr Genevieve Goulding AM (King's Birthday); Ian Grieve OAM (King's Birthday); Eddie Vann OAM (King's Birthday); Rhonda Clayton AM (King's Birthday); Margaret Curnow OAM (King's Birthday); Noel McPherson OAM (King's Birthday); Linda Vann OAM (King's Birthday); Judith deBoer OAM (King's Birthday); and Milton (Ross) Bartlett AM (King's Birthday)*

Front row seated from L to R

*Raymond Sandford OAM (King's Birthday); Lone White OAM (Australia Day); Daryl Gould OAM (Australia Day); Carmel Gould OAM (Australia Day); Ronda Nix OAM, Chairman, The Order of Australia Association, Queensland Branch; Dr Philip Moses AM (King's Birthday); Graeme Haussmann OAM (Australia Day); Rose Swadling OAM (Australia Day); Ronlyn Benbow OAM (King's Birthday); and Warrant Officer Timothy Langston OAM (Australia Day).*

Absent from photo *Greg Nothling OAM (Australia Day).*

## 5. Queensland Branch Members' Fellowship Lunch – July 2023

Sixty-three guests, including 41 OAAQ members, attended the Members' Fellowship Lunch in the Skyview Room at Wynnum Manly Leagues Club, at Manly West in Brisbane on **Thursday 13 July 2023**.

This followed on from the success of the inaugural Fellowship Lunch held at the Nudgee Golf Club, Brisbane in August last year with leading cardiologist *Dr Con Aroney AM* as guest speaker.

At this year's lunch, *John McCoy OAM*, the respected Queensland former sports broadcaster, was our "after lunch" speaker. John totally captivated the audience with his selected insights on his 50 years of radio excellence. His presentation was highly entertaining. It was bright and breezy and he had everyone riveted to their seats and thirsting to hear more of his interesting anecdotes.

Most of our events tend to be held north of the Brisbane River; however for a welcome change this event was held on Brisbane southside and at a new venue at Wynnum Manly Leagues Club.

These less formal Fellowship Lunches appear popular with Members and are set to become an annual event on the Queensland Branch social calendar.



## 6. Queensland Branch Morning Tea & Tour Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy – November



Thirty-three Queensland Branch members and guests were afforded a rare and wonderful opportunity on **Wednesday 29 November 2023** to find out how Queensland's dedicated Emergency Services personnel are trained to be the first responders coping with a real emergency, when they inspected the facilities at the **Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy (QCESA)** at Whyte Island at the Port of Brisbane. The Academy combines two dedicated training units – The School of Fire and Emergency Training and the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) Education Centre.

With limited visitor parking facilities at QCESA, the group enjoyed the novelty of being transported to and from the facility by chartered bus. Everyone enjoyed the experience.

Over morning tea the group received a brief overview of the QCESA Facility, its purpose and functions, facilitated by *John Moy*, the Academy's Business Operations Manager and *David Brose*, QAS Whyte Island Coordinator, Clinical Education. Morning tea over, the staff organised an interesting tour of the complex which left our members "star struck". What this facility offers by way of on the spot emergency training was a real eye opener.

Our visit concluded with a PowerPoint presentation offering further insight into the Academy's work. I was delighted to present plaques of appreciation to the two training units. One was presented to *Superintendent Adrian Gielis*, Acting Executive Manager, Initial Services Programs – QAS Education Centre and the other to *Superintendent Tim Watkins*, Executive Manager, Operations Business Management Command.

This was an outstanding event organised by the Queensland Branch for its members and my thanks to *Dr Mick Davis AM ASM*, our Deputy Chairman and a former paramedic, for his behind the scenes work in liaising with the appropriate emergency services management to make the event possible.



**Left** – A happy group of members and guests travelling to the Academy in a novel way by chartered bus.

**Centre** – One of the many training props at the facility inspected by the Members – a rubble pile with Translink bus and a car after a major collision.

**Right** – Receiving commemorative appreciation plaques from *Ronda Nix OAM*, Queensland Branch Chairman (middle) are *Superintendent Adrian Gielis* (left) and *Superintendent Tim Watkins* (right).

## 7. King's Coronation Dinner (combining with the Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship in Queensland)



Our Association members joined with members of the Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship in Queensland at a special Dinner on **Friday 5 May 2023** to celebrate the Coronation of Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla. The actual coronation took place in London the next day. One hundred and forty guests attended including 72 of our Association members and guests.

The function was held in the Grand Ballroom at the Tattersall's Club in the Brisbane CBD. The formal part of the programme included key speeches, one which I delivered on behalf of OAAQ members and another by *Bill Willcocks*, the Chairman of the Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship in Queensland. The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, *Adrian Schrinner* was also a special guest and briefly addressed the gathering.

The guest speaker at the event was *Lyndall De Marco AM* who shared highlights of working for His Majesty the King when he was Prince of Wales. During the evening, guests were entertained with music delivered by the Australian Army Band Brisbane Wind Ensemble.

This was a memorable occasion enjoyed by all guests in attendance.



**Top left** – portion of the gathering enjoying good fellowship.

**Top right** – Enjoying pre-dinner drinks on arrival.

**Bottom left** – *Lyndall De Marco AM* , guest speaker addressing the gathering.

Photo above – The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of Brisbane *Adrian Schrinner* addressing the gathering.

## 8. Queensland Regional Groups – 2023 Conveners

I offer my sincere personal thanks to the following members who have continued or commenced their role as Regional Group Convener of their respective regional groups throughout 2023.

<b>Regional Group</b>	<b>Convener</b>
Gold Coast	<i>Sanda Doumany OAM *</i>
Sunshine Coast	<i>Marjorie Voss OAM</i>
Darling Downs	<i>Megan McNicholl OAM</i>
Wide Bay Burnett	<i>Judy Peters OAM **</i>
Central Queensland	<i>Dr. Wallace Taylor OAM</i>
Mackay Whitsunday	<i>Carmel Daveson AM</i>
Townsville	<i>David Jackson OAM</i>
Far North Queensland	<i>John Hardy OAM</i>

*\* Sandra Doumany OAM replaced Clive Mitchell Taylor OAM as Convener of the Gold Coast Regional Group in June 2023*

*\*\* Judy Peters OAM replaced Donna Duncan OAM as Convener of the Wide Bay Burnett Regional Group in March 2023*

Honours and citations for each Convener are listed in **Appendix B** on page 35.

Our regional groups play a very significant role in servicing Association members outside the Greater Brisbane Metro area and keeping them interested and involved in the Association. Queensland is a very decentralized State with 48.8% of the total Queensland Branch membership (581 out of 1191 members) residing outside the Metro area in these regions. The importance of having strong regional groups cannot be overstated and I reiterate my thanks to the Regional Conveners for keeping each dispersed Regional Group strong and viable.

I extend my thanks to *Darryl Seccombe OAM* who continued in the role of coordinating the activities of the regional groups in 2023 with enthusiasm, acting as a trusted conduit between the Regional Conveners and the Queensland Branch Committee throughout the year.

The following is a table showing the breakup of Queensland Branch members across the metro area and the 8 Queensland regions as at 1 March 2024.

Name of Region	Members	% of members
Greater Brisbane Metro Area	610	50.84
Gold Coast	136	11.44
Sunshine Coast	154	13.05
Darling Downs	73	6.19
Wide Bay Burnett	45	3.98
Central Queensland	47	3.89
Whitsunday Isaac Mackay	18	1.35
Townsville	53	4.66
Far North Queensland	52	4.32
NSW Members aligned to Qld Branch	3	0.25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1191</b>	<b>100%</b>

In March 2023 long standing Wide Bay Burnett Regional Group Convener *Donna Duncan OAM* from Childers, decided it was the right time to “pull up stumps” and pass the baton on to someone else. Donna has been an excellent Convener of this Regional Group since taking over from the *Late Kevin Gould OAM* eleven years ago in July 2012. Replacing Donna as Convener is former Bundaberg Regional Councillor *Judy Peters OAM*. I look forward to enjoying a good working rapport with Judy in the future and I wish Donna all the very best for good health and contentment in her ‘retirement’.

During June 2023 there was another changing of the baton with Regional Group Conveners. *Sandra Doumany OAM* was appointed by the Queensland Branch Committee as the new Convener of the Gold Coast Regional Group, taking over from *Clive Mitchell-Taylor OAM* who was unable to continue in the role, due to ill health. The first lunch Sandra oversaw in September at Sanctuary Cove Golf Club was a great success and I look forward to some memorable functions being organized by the Gold Coast Regional Group under her leadership in the future. I would also like to offer my thanks to Clive for his contributions as the past Convener of the Gold Coast Group since 2019, taking over from *Air Vice Marshall Bill Collins AO*, and we wish Clive well for the future.

## 9. Queensland Regional Groups Functions

### 9.1 Sunshine Coast Regional Group Lunch – March 2023

Sixty-six guests met for lunch at the **Gympie RSL Club, Gympie** on **Thursday 9 March 2023**.

To celebrate International Womens' Day, *Dr Branka Starcevic* a well-known Gympie dentist with a reputation for being "most gentle" was the guest speaker. Branka spoke of her journey from migrating as a child in 1971 from her home in the former Yugoslavia to her life today as a true Australian.

*Glen Harwig*, Mayor of Gympie Regional Council and Mayoress *Tabitha Passey* were special guests at the function.



At the Lunch at the Gympie RSL Club are L-R - *Glen Harwig*, Mayor of Gympie Regional Council. Mayoress *Tabitha Passey*; *Maureen Rush OAM*; *Marjorie Voss OAM*; *Dr Branka Starcevic* (guest speaker) and *Royce Voss OAM*



*Paula Penfold AM* (left) presents *Dr Branka Starcevic* with a gift and Certificate of Appreciation.

### 9.2. Wide Bay Burnett Regional Group Lunch – March 2023

Twenty-six guests enjoyed lunch in a pleasant setting at **Vintner's Secret Winery, Childers** on **Sunday 26 March 2023**.

I, along with several other Branch Committee members, attended the event which featured guest speaker *Trish Mears*, Community Engagement Advisor, Bundaberg Regional Council, speaking about her role and the importance of including all members of a community in decision making. The event was made extra special to say goodbye to long standing Regional Group Convener, *Donna Duncan OAM* and introducing new Convener *Judy Peters AM*, a former Councillor for the Bundaberg Regional Council, It gave me much pleasure in presenting Donna with a commemorative plaque of appreciation in recognition of her 11 year's service as the group's convener.

"Lunch at the Winery"

Members and guests enjoying the outdoors in a pleasant setting.



### 9.3 Darling Downs Regional Group Morning Tea – April 2023



From L-R - Annabelle Brayley;  
Megan McNicoll OAM (Convener)  
and Dr John Cox OAM

Fifty guests attended a morning tea at the **Downs Club, Toowoomba** on **Friday 21 April 2023**. Annabelle Brayley, author of “Our Vietnam Nurses” in 2016 was the guest speaker.

Those present were deeply moved as they listened to Annabelle explain why she was motivated to write the book and share the stories of some of the Australian women who nursed in South Vietnam between 1964 to 1972. Annabelle also spoke of the evolution of a newly composed opera “The Nurses at Vung Tau”. Inspired by Annabelle’s book and created by young Australian Soprano, *Elizabeth Lewis* with music composed by *Dr Brenton Broadstock AM* and conducted by *Patrick Pickett CSM*, this opera was written as a tribute to the men and women who served in Vietnam. Guests were also treated to a videoed vignette of the production illustrating the evocative, often haunting score, which enriched the magnificent voices of Elizabeth and the cast, and emphasised the stark simplicity of the stage setting.

This was a function I enjoyed attending and I was pleased to be able to address the gathering and talk about Queensland Branch matters and how to submit nominations for suitable persons for an Order of Australia award.

### 9.4 Townsville Regional Group Lunch – April 2023

Thirty-three guests were in attendance at the lunch at **Tom’s Tavern, Townsville** on **Saturday 29 April 2023**. This was a first time for the Group at Tom’s Tavern and it proved a great success.

Guest speaker was well known local radio breakfast announcer *Steve Price OAM*, known affectionately as “Pricey”. Steve entertained those present in his own inimitable style, talking about his many experiences in a radio career of 40-plus years, after moving from Melbourne to Townsville and also leading to a book being published.



At the Townsville lunch are L-R – Megan Law; Ren Pedersen OAM; Derek Smith OAM; Rhonda Smith; Guest Speaker Steve (Pricey) Price OAM; Barbara Christie and Tim McKee OAM



## 9.5 Central Queensland Regional Group Lunch – May 2023

Seventy-six guests comprising Association members and community representatives, attended a lunch at the **Frenchville Sports Club, Rockhampton** on **31 May 2023**. Included in the gathering were twelve 'year 12' students from three local High Schools.

Special guests included *Ms Brittany Lauga MP*, Member for Keppel and Assistant Minister for Health & Regional Health Infrastructure; *Councillor Tony Williams*, Mayor Rockhampton Regional Council & *Councillor Neville Ferrier*, Mayor of Banana Shire Council. Guest speaker was *Professor Ross Homel AO*, Professor Emeritus, Criminology and Criminal Justice, Griffith University. Ross provided a very informative presentation on the data and deductions from his long experience with preventing youth crime.

I attended the event as the Queensland Branch Chairman and took the opportunity to spread the message to nominate worthy Queenslanders for an Order of Australia award.



Present at the CQ Regional Group Lunch on 31 May were L-R - Mayor Tony Williams (Rockhampton); E. Professor Ross Homel AO (Guest speaker); E. Professor Debbie Clayton AM; Ronda Nix OAM (OAAQ Chairman); Brittany Lauga MP, Member for Keppel; Mayor Neville Ferrier (Banana); Grant Cassidy OAM; and Inspector Ben Carrol, Convenor, Community Based Crime Action Committee, Queensland Police Service.

## 9.6 Sunshine Coast Regional Group Lunch – June 2023

Seventy-six guests attended the lunch held at the **Alex Surf Club, Alexandra Heads**, on **Thursday 8 June 2023**.

In attendance was *Councillor Joe Natoli*, Sunshine Coast Regional Council and a number of local 2023 Australia Day award recipients. I also attended this function along with other members of the Queensland Branch Committee. The guest speaker was *Professor Stephen Gough ASM*, Assistant Commissioner -Sunshine Coast & Wide Bay Region Queensland Ambulance Service, whose topic was "The Paramedic of To-day-Clinical Practice and Professional Registration".



**Left-** Portion of the 76 guests at the Alexandra Heads lunch enjoying good fellowship.

**Right-** Dr Mick Davis AM ASM (left) presents guest speaker Stephen Gough ASM with a Certificate and a gift.

## 9.7 Wide Bay Burnett Regional Group Lunch – July 2023



At the Wondai RSL Club from L-R – Elaine Madill OAM, Judy Peters OAM (Regional Group Convener); Winston Burrows (Guest speaker) and Ronda Nix OAM, Queensland Branch Chairman.

Twenty-six guests attended the lunch organized at the **Wondai RSL Club, Wondai** on **1 July 2023**. Many of the guests travelled a number of hours to get to Wondai ( 216 kilometres south, south west of Bundaberg) to attend the event.

This event was organised through a local member and community advocate *Elaine Madill OAM* with a special visit to the Wondai Art Gallery, where members were met by the Gallery Coordinator and Gallery volunteers, before moving to the Wondai RSL for lunch.

The after lunch guest speaker was *Winston Burrows*, Chair of the Wondai and District Homes for the Aged known as 'The Laurels'. Winston spoke of the growth and/or demise of businesses and organisations over time and recalled the importance of voluntary work which adds to more than assisting others, but adds to your own well-being as well.

## 9.8 Whitsunday Isaac Mackay Regional Group – Informal Get Together – July 2023

The Whitsunday Isaac Mackay Regional Group is based in Mackay and has the smallest membership of our regional groups with just 16 members. As such, the region has opted to hold occasional informal get-togethers, usually in the home of the Convener *Carmel Daveson AM* instead of a function at a professional hospitality venue.

An informal get together was again arranged in **Carmel's home at Mackay** on **Saturday evening 29 July 2023** with 10 guests. Although small in number, the great hospitality of Carmel always ensures there is a good atmosphere, good food and good fellowship.



Attendees at the informal get-together in Mackay

## 9.9 Townsville Regional Group Annual Dinner – August 2023

Thirty guests attended the Group's Annual Dinner held at **Seagulls Resort, Townsville** on **Saturday 19 August 2023**.

This function was marred by several members and their guests having to pull out at the last minute due to sickness and this included the scheduled guest speaker. I was attending as Queensland Branch Chairman and as is customary when a Branch Chairmen visits a region, I was invited to address the gathering and on this occasion I assumed the role as their replacement guest speaker.

Despite the lower than expected numbers, the function was heralded a success by all.



**Left-** Derek Smith OAM (left) met up with Queensland Branch Chairman, Ronda Nix OAM at the Dinner  
**Right:** Townsville Group Committee member Pauline Woolbridge OAM with Rhonda Smith at the Dinner.

## 9.10 Far North Queensland Regional Group – Mayoral Reception September 2023

Bob Manning OAM, the Mayor of Cairns Regional Council, hosted another Mayoral Reception, this time for the 2023 award recipients residing in the Far North Queensland (FNQ) Region, on **Thursday 14 September 2023** in the **Cairns Council Chambers**.

There were 60 guests present including several current FNQ regional group members. In addition to Mayor Manning's address of welcome, the Regional Group Convener John Hardy OAM gave a highly informative PowerPoint presentation titled "About the Order and nominating deserving Australians for an award" and I was invited to also address the gathering about Queensland Branch matters.

Over the years the Queensland Branch has been indebted to Mayor Bob Manning OAM for his continued strong support for The Order of Australia by way of his hosting of Mayoral Receptions. During his address, he announced his retirement as Mayor due to ill-health, after nearly 12 years in office. We wish him well in retirement.



**Left –** Mayor Bob Manning addresses the gathering.

**Right-** At the Mayoral Reception – L-R- Mareeba Shire Council Mayor Angela Toppin AM, Joan Moore OAM, Ashley Cuppitt AFSM OAM, Louise Anderson and John Hardy OAM (Regional Group Convener)



### 9.11 Sunshine Coast Regional Group Lunch – September 2023

Sixty-three guests attended the lunch held at the **Caloundra Power Boat Club, Caloundra** on **Thursday 7 September 2023**.

This function was made memorable by the dual celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday of *Allan Quartermaine OAM*, a keen, regular Sunshine Coast function attendee and the 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday of *Marjorie Voss OAM*, the Sunshine Coast Regional Group Convener. A special cake was cut by both Allan and Marjorie during proceedings and I had the absolute pleasure in presenting Allan with a commemorative plaque from the Queensland Branch to celebrate his wonderful achievement. Quite a number of other Queensland Branch Committee members attended to give support to these two stalwarts.

In addition to the dual celebrations, the gathering enjoyed the after lunch address from guest speaker *Robert Reid AM* sharing his experiences for over twenty-five years in the United Nations Office of the Prosecutor.



**Left** - 190 years of celebration at the Caloundra Power Boat Club. *Marjorie Voss OAM* (left) – Happy 90<sup>th</sup> and *Allan Quartermaine OAM* – congratulations on scoring your “century”. With Allan are his daughters *Lesley Wint* (second left) and *Barbara Quartermaine* (right).



*Dr Mick Davis AM ASM* presents a gift and a Certificate of Appreciation to guest speaker *Robert Reid AM*.

### 9.12 Gold Coast Regional Group Lunch – September 2023

The Gold Coast Regional Group was “revived” after a period of non-activity, with a lunch at **Sanctuary Cove Golf Club** on **Thursday 21 September 2023**. This was the first event organised by new Convener *Sandra Doumany OAM*, with forty-eight guests present. Guest speaker was *Professor Michael F Good AO* who gave an interesting address on his work heading the Laboratory of Vaccines for the Developing World, Institute for Glycomics, Griffith University on the Gold Coast.



**Left** – New Convener *Sandra Doumany OAM* introduces herself to the members. **Right** – Guest speaker *Michael F Good AO*



### 9.13 Central Queensland Regional Group Lunch – October 2023

Fifty-eight guests attended the lunch held at the **Frenchville Sports Club, Rockhampton** on **Monday 9 October 2023**. Included in the numbers were representatives from community groups including eight secondary school students from four of the local high schools.

The guest speaker was *David Grenfell OAM* who outlined the success of the 'Shelter Collective' project aimed at helping to address the increasingly large homeless problem in Central Queensland.



From L-R – *Graham Brady OAM; Grant Cassidy OAM; Dr Wallace (Wal) Taylor OAM (Regional Group Convener); Dave Grenfell OAM (Guest speaker); Ree Grenfell; and Kara Krehlik, Principal, Rockhampton Girls Grammar School*

### 9.14 Darling Downs Regional Group Lunch – November 2023



Enjoying the tour of the Qantas Group Pilot Academy are from L-R – *Margaret Curnow OAM; Ian Grieve OAM and Penny Hamilton OAM*

Thirty-four guests attended a novel event visiting the **Qantas Group Pilot Academy at Wellcamp Airport**, outside Toowoomba on **Friday 24 November 2023**.

The Academy is part of Qantas' long term plans to built a sustainable talent pipeline and meet the increasing need for skilled aviators.

*John Macgregor*, Business Development Officer of Flight Training Adelaide – Queensland (FTA Qld), the Academy's training provider, arranged an informative talk and tour of the facilities, after which the group had an informal lunch in the Academy Dining Room where they were able to talk 'one on one' with current trainee pilots.

## 10. Queensland Branch 2023 Secondary Schools Citizenship Awards



*The Honourable Paul de Jersey AC CVO KC*, the former (26<sup>th</sup>) Governor of Queensland came out of “retirement” to present the Secondary Schools Citizenship Awards at the 24<sup>th</sup> annual Awards Presentation Ceremony in the Premiers’ Hall of Queensland’s Parliament House on **Friday 15 September 2023**. We thank Mr. de Jersey for his keen support of our awards programme and for his address to the gathering on the value of citizenship and community service. Including his time as our Governor, this was the sixth occasion that Mr. de Jersey has presented these awards.

Secondary Schools Citizenship Award plaques were presented to twelve outstanding students selected by a three person judging panel. The Awards showcase some impressive Queensland secondary school students performing demonstrable examples of selfless community service and promoting true Australian citizenship. The acceptance speeches from the students were inspirational and the students brought great credit to the schools they represented.

We received an excellent response of 94 nominations of worthy year 12 students from 59 Secondary Schools, comprising a good sprinkling of both State High Schools and private colleges from across Queensland. This is the most nominations received and number of schools represented, since records have been maintained from 2011 onwards.

Music was provided during the Presentation by the Cleveland District State High School Chamber Strings

One hundred and forty-eight guests including students and their families, school principals and representatives, school associations, State Members of Parliament and 18 members of the Association attended.

*Mrs Gina Fairfax AC*, the wife of awards sponsor *Mr Tim Fairfax AC* presented Certificates of Community Service to 14 local students, who were not awardees, prior to the main awards. All other nominated students, who were not awardees, were issued with Certificates to be presented at their respective schools.

I would like to thank *Mr Tim Fairfax AC* for his continued support and sponsorship of the awards programme over a number of years. My thanks also to the judging panel of *Dina Browne AO*, *Peter Blatch OAM* and *Chris Lassig* who once again selected a wonderful group of worthy students from throughout Queensland to receive these awards.

I would also add my thanks to *Geoff Cowles OAM*, the Awards and Metro Events Coordinator for his dedicated coordination of the awards programme.

## Secondary Schools

### Citizenship

### Awards

2023



**Centre large photo** – Our 12 outstanding student awardees for 2023

**Top left** – *The Honourable Paul de Jersey AC CVO KC* addresses the gathering.

**Top right** – *Mr Leonard McKeown*, Principal, Cleveland District State High School responds on behalf of all schools.

**Bottom left** – The Cleveland District State High School Chamber Strings perform “Pride of the Highlands” by *Katie O’Hara LaBrie* as the musical interlude.

**Bottom right** – *Ronda Nix OAM*, Queensland Branch Chairman moves a vote of thanks to our Guest of Honour –*The Honourable Paul de Jersey AC CVO KC*.

## 11. Queensland Branch 2023 Senior Volunteer Awards

The Association continued its Senior Volunteer Awards programme in 2023.

The judging panel for the 2023 awards, comprising *Dr Mick Davis AM ASM* (Chairman of the Panel), *Professor Paul McNally OAM*, and *Mrs Kathy Wooldridge OAM* has selected three worthy volunteers to receive this Award. My thanks to Mick, Paul and Kathy for agreeing to be on the judging panel again this year. The Awardees will be announced and presented with their awards during the Annual Dinner tonight.

The purpose of the Senior Volunteer Awards is to recognise outstanding voluntary contributions made by Queensland Seniors to their communities, independently or through organisations with which they are associated. Any current member of The Order of Australia Association, Queensland Branch, residing in Queensland may nominate a volunteer who is 60 years or older.

I encourage members of the Association to nominate worthy senior volunteers in 2024.

I acknowledge the continuing generous sponsorship of the awards received from Blight Rayner Architects and particularly *Michael Rayner AM*, a director of the company and strong supporter of these awards.



Presentation of the 2022 Award winners at the Annual Dinner on 20 March 2023- from L to R – *Ronda Nix OAM* ,Chairman, Queensland Branch); *Lorraine Duckwitz* (Aspley, Brisbane), awardee; *John Herwig* (Elliott Heads near Bundaberg), awardee; *Pamela Ferguson* ( Carindale, Brisbane), awardee; and *Michael Rayner AM* ( presenter and award sponsor) representing Blight Rayner Architecture.



# 12. Queensland Branch Communications

## 12.1 The Order Magazine

Newsworthy articles for the dedicated three pages assigned to the Queensland Branch in each of the four editions of the national magazine *The Order* continued to be produced to a high standard. Our pages have been well received by the Queensland membership and interested members from other Branches.

Graham Hyde OAM continued as Editor of the Queensland Branch pages of *The Order* and I thank Graham for his dedication in this role.



## 12.2 Communicating to members via Communiqués from the Queensland Branch Chairman

To supplement the quarterly communication that members receive via *The Order* National magazine, I have continued the practice of Dr Gary Bacon AM, my predecessor as Chairman, of sending out short Communiqués via broadcast emails, to Queensland members at various times throughout 2023. This continues to provide a means to bring items of interest to the attention of members.

Communiqués were sent out in March, July, October and December 2023 making eight reports from me during the year when you add my regular column in each quarterly edition of *The Order*.



## 12.3 Communicating to members via the Association website

The Queensland segment of the OAA National website was maintained with material provided to the national webmaster by *Geoff Cowles OAM* (OAAQ Awards and Metro Events Coordinator). The website contains advice about upcoming events and our awards. Pictorial records of past events have been added and archival material has been kept up to date as far as is practicable.

I urge members to make it a habit to visit our website from time to time at <http://theorderofaustralia.asn.au> to keep up to date with what is happening in the Association, particularly national matters.



## 13. Queensland Branch Activity at the National Level

Our representation on the National Board has been continued by *Peter McMurtrie AO KStJ* who was nominated by the Queensland Branch to be the Queensland Branch Nominated Director on the National Board. Thank you Peter for carrying out this essential task for the Queensland Branch members.

*Graham Hyde OAM*, a member of our Queensland Branch Committee continued in his role as National Secretary and discharged his administrative duties with due diligence. In addition, *Kathy Wooldridge OAM*, who was co-opted as a member of the Queensland Branch Committee, continued her excellent role as the National Membership Director on the National Board, developing new and innovative ways to try to increase Association membership.

Throughout the year the Queensland Branch Committee was kept up to date with National Board matters by receiving copies of the minutes of the Board meetings when convened. The Queensland Branch Committee provided input into revisions of national policy and procedure documents from time to time and provided comment to the relevant Director on the National Board. *Paula Penfold AM*, the Queensland Branch Committee's Governance and Policy Officer, was charged with providing preliminary comment and recommendations to the Queensland Branch Committee prior to Committee discussion. I thank Paula for her efforts in these national matters.

At time of publication the planning for the National Conference in Perth, Western Australia from 16 to 19 May 2024 is well advanced. Despite the huge distance to travel to Perth from Brisbane, it is hoped that a good cohort of Queensland Branch members will take the opportunity to attend the Conference and enjoy the excellent programme of events on offer.

## 14. Membership Trends

### 14.1 Membership uptake by new award recipients

There were 223 Queensland recipients who received awards in the Order of Australia in 2023 and 79 of these are now members of The Order of Australia Association, as at 1 March 2024. This represents 35.4% of the total number of 2023 Queensland recipients joining the Association compared with 39.9% last year (69 of 173 recipients joining). This is a disappointing decrease of 4.5% compared with last year. There was also a lower than expected uptake of new award recipients accepting our invitation to be our special guests at the sole 2023 Combined Celebratory Welcome lunch with 15.7% of the total award recipients attending compared to 23.1% over two lunches in 2022. As mentioned previously, when the celebratory welcome lunches cannot be held during the week of Government House investitures, the number of award recipients able to attend these lunches declines.

### 14.2 Current Queensland Branch Member statistics as at 1 March 2024

As at 1 March 2024 there were 1191 current members of the Queensland Branch. The following table provides a breakdown of the various types of current memberships, with corresponding statistics as reported in the previous Annual Report in March 2023, in brackets.

Type of membership	1 March 2024		1 March 2023	
	Number	% of total current members	Number	% of total current members
Paid lifetime members	620	52.1%	( 632 )	( 53.9% )
Lifetime members by installment	9	0.8%	( 10 )	( 0.9% )
Annual Members	312	26.2%	( 307 )	( 26.2% )
Three Year Members	239	20.0%	( 216 )	( 18.4% )
Ten Year Members	10	0.8%	( 7 )	( 0.6% )
New 25 year membership	1	0.1%	N/a	
Total Qld Branch Members	1191	100%	( 1172 )	( 100% )

The number of current Queensland Branch Members reflects a small increase of 19 over last year (1172 as at 1 March 2023 to 1191 as at 1 March 2024). Thus the 79 new awardees who took out membership of the Association last year are offset by 60 membership departures in the year, due to members passing away or not renewing their membership. It is pleasing that there is a small increase in overall membership numbers. However one wonders whether this may have been even higher had more awardees been able to take up our offer to attend our combined welcome celebratory lunch this year.

It is interesting to note the steady increase in three year memberships from 18.4 % of the total membership last year to 20% this year. It is good to see the interest in new members opting for the ten year membership option introduced by the National Board in 2022 with 10 members this year. Also one member has opted for the new 25 year membership offered by the Association late last year.

As at 1 March 2024 there were 1124 members out of the total of 1191 members (94.4%) supplying email addresses for the membership database. Broadcast emails are the preferred means of communicating upcoming events and Association news to the wider membership. This compares with 1080 out of 1172 members (92.2%) in March 2023.

*Dr Mick Davis AM ASM* added the role of Membership Officer to his position as Deputy Chairman, working with the National office tracking additions and removals from the membership data lists as well as providing a valuable service in notifying when members pass away.

I thank *Geoff Cowles OAM*, the Awards and Metro Events Coordinator, for updating membership statistical tables compiled over the past 5 years, which are appended to this report on page 32 as **Appendix A**. These statistics also include the ratio of male and female award recipients and the number of awardees by Queensland regions.



## 15. Queensland Branch Chairman's Closing Remarks

The past year was one of great change for the Queensland Branch Committee of The Order of Australia Association and a steep learning curve for many. At last year's AGM, members elected a new Chairman, a new Branch Secretary and a new Branch Treasurer, along with two new Branch Committee Members. Neither our incoming Branch Secretary *Robyn Porter OAM* nor our incoming Treasurer *Dr Dennis Young AM* had served on the Branch Committee previously, and it is to their great credit that they have both slotted into their roles so seamlessly. We are fortunate to have such competent and talented people on our committee. New Branch Committee Members, *Irene Cayas OAM* and *Kelvin Brown OAM*, were appointed to the new portfolio of Multicultural and Diversity Officer and to the position of Assistant Merchandise Officer respectively. Long time Branch Committee member *Marjorie Voss OAM* was allocated the new portfolio of Protocol Officer. All other members of the 2022 Branch Committee retained their 2022 portfolios.

My sincere thanks to all members of the Branch Committee for the support you have given me during the year; for the time and energy you devote to your portfolios and for the valuable input you provide.



The most significant event in the past year for the Order of Australia was the coronation of the new Sovereign of The Order of Australia, His Majesty King Charles III, King of Australia, and his consort Queen Camilla, on 6 May 2023. To celebrate the occasion, the Queensland Branch, in partnership with the Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship In Queensland, held a Gala Black Tie Dinner in the

Grand Ballroom at Tattersall's Club on the evening of the 5 May. I had the great honour of proposing the Loyal Toast to The King (photo at left).

Queensland is not only geographically large in area, but is also the most decentralised of all the mainland states, with less than half of the population (49%) living in the capital city, compared with 68% in other states. There are members of The Order of Australia Association living in cities and towns both large and small from Cape York in the North all the way down to the Southern border with New South Wales and as far West as the border with the Northern Territory and South Australia. We are completely dependent on the wonderful people who give their time to take on the responsibility of being Conveners to provide fellowship to our members, not only in the country regions, but also in Metropolitan Brisbane as well.



At a Lunch at Vintners Secret Vineyard in Childers on 26 March, I performed my very first official duty as Chairman by presenting a plaque of appreciation to the retiring Wide Bay Burnett Regional Group

Convener, *Donna Duncan OAM* (at left in the left hand photo) for her service, and presenting the incoming Regional Group Convener, *Judy Peters OAM* (at centre in the right hand photo) with her official name badge.

The Branch Committee appointed two new Regional Group Conveners in 2023. The second appointee was *Sandra Doumany OAM* who was appointed Regional Group Convener for the Gold Coast to succeed *Clive Mitchell-Taylor OAM*, Convener from 2019 – 2022 who sadly had to resign due to health issues. I was delighted to present Sandra with her Convener's name badge at the Fellowship Lunch held at Wynnum Manly Leagues Club on 13 July.

On behalf of the Queensland Branch Committee and the members of the Wide Bay Burnett and Gold Coast Regions I thank both Donna and Clive for their service.

In the past 12 months, apart from my visit to Childers, I have been privileged to make an official Chairman's visit to Regional Groups in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Wondai, Bundaberg, Caloundra, Alexandra Headlands, Sanctuary Cove on the Gold Coast and Toowoomba, where I have met many exceptional and interesting members.

I congratulate our Metropolitan Events Coordinator *Geoff Cowles OAM*, and all the Regional Group Conveners listed in this report, on the excellence of their functions and events; the service they provide to members; and the work they do in promoting The Order of Australia to the public at large.

A sincere thank you to *John Hardy OAM* and *David Jackson OAM* who deputised for me at investiture ceremonies in Cairns and Townsville respectively. Also, thanks to the members of the Branch Committee who deputised for me on the days during the Australia Day and Queen's Birthday investiture weeks in May and September, when I was unable to attend at Government House in Brisbane in person.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the support I receive in my role from my husband Keith, and for the support provided to the Association by the partners of many of our hardworking Committee Members and Regional Conveners, such as *Charyl Cowles*, *Royce Voss OAM*, *Peter Wooldridge*, *Desley Jackson*, *Rondha Taylor*, and *Terry Edmondson*.

During the year I had the pleasure and privilege of representing the Queensland Branch at the following functions and events:

- a. the Coronation Tribute Church Service at St John's Cathedral, Brisbane on 7 May;
- b. the Investiture of Recipients in the Australia Day Awards at Government House Queensland on 15 May;
- c. the meeting of the National Board of The Order of Australia Association with Branch Chairmen in Geelong, Victoria on 18 May;
- d. the Vice Regal Welcome to Geelong and the National Conference of The Order of Australia Association from 18- 21 May;
- e. the Reception at Government House Queensland for the Coronation and Birthday of His Majesty King Charles III on 13 June;
- f. an interview on Brisbane Ethnic Community Radio 4EB with *Irene Cayas OAM* on 24 August, promoting nominations for awards in The Order of Australia;
- g. the National Flag Day Ceremony in King George Square and Morning Tea hosted by The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, *Adrian Schinner* on 31 August;

- h. the Investiture of Recipients in the King's Birthday Awards at Government House Queensland on 13 September; and
- i. a Cocktail Reception at Government House Queensland for the Launch of The Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship International Student Project on 28 November.

I encourage you all to take an interest in the Association's activities and participate in the events offered; to nominate others for an award in The Order of Australia; and to promote awareness of The Order of Australia to others whenever you have the opportunity.

In closing, allow me to encourage you to attend the National Conference being held in Perth this year from 16 to 19 May. Apart from it promising to be a most enjoyable and informative event, it will provide you with opportunities to meet and mingle with likeminded members from across Australia. It will allow you the opportunity to participate in both the National AGM and the Members' Forum to contribute your ideas for the future direction of your Association. It will also allow you to observe the transformational benefits provided by The Order of Australia Foundation Scholarships awarded to talented young students with the potential to be the leaders of the future.

I commend my Report to you and move its adoption.

**Mrs Ronda L. Nix OAM, Branch Chairman.**

### *Acknowledgement*

*I wish to acknowledge the contribution of Geoff Cowles OAM, Awards and Metro Events Coordinator, in researching and producing much of the information in this report*



## APPENDIX A to 2023 Queensland Branch Annual Report

### Item 14, p 27 - Membership Trends – Award recipients 2020 through to 2023

Compiled by Geoff Cowles OAM, Awards and Metro Events Coordinator

#### A. 2023

##### A.1. Australia Day 2023 only

No of recipients	No who have joined	% of total recipients joining	No who came to Lunches	No of these who joined	% of lunch recipients joining	% of recipients coming to lunch
100	33	33%	14	11	78.6%	14%*

##### A.2 . King 's Birthday 2023 only

No of recipients	No who have joined	% of total recipients joining	No who came to Lunches	No of these who joined	% of lunch recipients joining	% of recipients coming to lunch
123	46	37.4%	21	14	66.7%	17.1%*

##### A.3. Combined 2023 Recipients – Australia Day and King's Birthday

No of recipients	No who joined	% of total recipients joining	No who came to Lunches	No of these who joined	% of lunch recipients joining	% of recipients coming to lunch
223	79	35.4%	35	25	71.4%	15.7%*

\* Note: in 2023 there was only the one combined Australia Day/King's Birthday awardees lunch

#### B. 2022

##### B.1. Australia Day 2022 only

No of recipients	No who have joined	% of total recipients joining	No who came to Lunches	No of these who joined	% of lunch recipients joining	% of recipients coming to lunch
99	35	35.3%	26	18	69.2%	26.3%

##### B.2 . Queen's Birthday 2022 only

No of recipients	No who have joined	% of total recipients joining	No who came to Lunches	No of these who joined	% of lunch recipients joining	% of recipients coming to lunch
74	34	45.9%	14	8	57.1%	18.9%

##### B.3. Combined 2022 Recipients – Australia Day and Queens Birthday

No of recipients	No who joined	% of total recipients joining	No who came to Lunches	No of these who joined	% of lunch recipients joining	% of recipients coming to lunch
173	69	39.9%	40	26	65%	23.1%



## C. 2021

### C.1. Australia Day 2021 only

No of recipients	No who have joined	% of total recipients joining	No who came to Lunches	No of these who joined	% of lunch recipients joining	% of recipients coming to lunch
83	33	39.8%	22	18	81.8	26.5%

### C.2 . Queen's Birthday 2021 only

No of recipients	No who have joined	% of total recipients joining	No who came to Lunches	No of these who joined	% of lunch recipients joining	% of recipients coming to lunch
122	58	47.5%	43	35	81.4%	35.2%

### C.3. Combined 2021 Recipients – Australia Day and Queens Birthday

No of recipients	No who joined	% of total recipients joining	No who came to Lunches	No of these who joined	% of lunch recipients joining	% of recipients coming to lunch
205	91	44.4%	65	53	81.5%	31.7%

\* Note: in 2021 there was only the one combined Australia Day/King's Birthday awardees lunch

## D. 2020

### D.1. Australia Day 2020 only

Total No of recipients	Recipients invited to a lunch	No who have joined	% of total recipients joining	No who came to Lunches *	No of these who joined	% of lunch recipients joining	% of invited recipients coming to lunch
115	91	39	33.9%	36	15	41.7%	39.6%

### D.2 . Queen's Birthday 2020 only

Total No of recipients	Recipients invited to a lunch	No who have joined	% of total recipients joining	No who came to Lunches *	No of these who joined	% of lunch recipients joining	% of invited recipients coming to lunch
122	86	45	36.9%	29	17	58.6%	33.7%

### D.3. Combined 2020 Recipients – Australia Day and Queens Birthday

Total No of recipients	Recipients invited to a lunch	No who joined	% of total recipients joining	No who came to Lunches *	No of these who joined	% of lunch recipients joining	% of invited recipients coming to lunch
237	177	84	35.4%	65	32	49.2%	36.7%

- includes for the lunch statistics in 2020 the three regional group events at Central Qld, Sunshine Coast and Darling Downs in addition to the one combined delayed Celebratory Welcome lunch in Brisbane, due to the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions.

## E. Queensland award recipients by region – Australia Day 2019 – Australia Day 2024

[AD = Australia Day: QB = Queen’s Birthday: KB = King’s Birthday ]

Honours	Total No.	Metro	Gold Coast	Sunshine Coast	Darling Downs	Wide Bay Burnett	Central Qld	Mackay W'Sunday	T'ville	Far North Qld
AD 2019	154	82	22	13	15	4	4	1	5	8
QB 2019	114	65	14	11	2	5	3	1	7	6
AD 2020	115	68	11	11	7	6	4	1	1	6
QB 2020	122	60	17	11	11	5	3	1	8	6
AD 2021	83	45	13	9	5	2	2	2	2	3
QB 2021	122	58	23	12	7	4	4	1	8	5
AD 2022	99	54	14	11	4	6	1	4	4	1
QB 2022	74	38	12	10	4	1	4	3	1	1
AD 2023	100	39	7	22	6	4	3	2	3	14
KB 2023	123	52	15	23	10	5	5	3	6	4
AD 2024	95	47	13	15	2	2	3	3	5	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1201</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>59</b>

## F. Ratio of male (M) to female (F) Queensland recipients – Australia Day 2019 through to Australia Day 2024

Honours	Total No.	M No.	M %	F No.	F %
Australia Day 2019	154	108	70.1 %	46	29.9 %
Queen’s Birthday 2019	114	82	71.9 %	32	28.1 %
Australia Day 2020	115	68	59.1 %	47	40.9 %
Queen’s Birthday 2020	122	84	68.9 %	38	31.1 %
Australia Day 2021	83	54	65.0 %	29	35.0 %
Queen’s Birthday 2021	122	78	64.0 %	44	36.0 %
Australia Day 2022	99	52	52.5 %	47	47.5 %
Queen’s Birthday 2022	74	46	62.2%	28	37.8%
Australia Day 2023	100	59	59%	41	41%
King’s Birthday 2023	123	70	56.9%	53	43.1%
Australia Day 2024	95	50	52.6%	45	47.4%
<b>Total – AD 2019 to AD 2024</b>	<b>1201</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>62.5%</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>37.5%</b>

**APPENDIX B to 2023 Queensland Branch Annual Report**  
**Order of Australia Honours and Citations – Branch Committee Members and Regional Conveners**

<b>A. QUEENSLAND BRANCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS</b>		
<i>Ronda Nix OAM</i>	QB 2013	For service to hockey.
<i>Dr Mick Davis AM ASM</i>	QB 2000	AM -For service to community health through the Queensland Ambulance Service and the Institute of Ambulance Officers, particularly in the areas of education and training.
<i>Robyn Porter OAM</i>	QB 2021	For service to science, and the community.
<i>Dr Dennis Young AM</i>	AD 2018	For significant service to community health in Queensland through alcohol and drug treatment support programs, and to the community.
<i>Kelvin Brown OAM</i>	AD 1994	In recognition of service to the RAAF
<i>Irene Cayas OAM</i>	AD 2018	For service to the multicultural community, to women, and to the aged.
<i>Geoff Cowles OAM</i>	AD 2007	For service to the community through a range of youth, sporting and church groups.
<i>Graham Hyde OAM</i>	AD 2019	For service to medical administration.
<i>Peter McMurtrie AO KStJ</i>	AD 2013	AO - For distinguished service to the community through leadership in the areas of emergency patient care and health service management and contributions to professional organisations.
<i>Paula Penfold AM</i>	AD 2016	For significant service to the community through support for people with Muscular Dystrophy, to child health ethical standards, and to medical research.
<i>Darryl Seccombe OAM</i>	QB 2011	For service to the community through a range of charitable organisations.
<i>Marjorie Voss OAM</i>	QB 2014	For service to women, and to youth through the Guiding movement.
<i>Dr Carol Cox AM</i>	AD 2014	For significant service to medicine in rural and remote areas as a general practitioner, to education, and to professional medical organisations.
<i>Kathy Wooldridge OAM</i>	AD 2019	For service to nursing.
<b>B. REGIONAL GROUP CONVENERS - ( Marjorie Voss OAM (Sunshine Coast) is listed above)</b>		
<i>Carmel Daveson AM</i> Whitsunday Isaac Mackay	AD 2009	For service to the Mackay region through a range of social welfare, education and arts organisations.
<i>Sandra Doumany OAM</i> Gold Coast	QB 2021	For service to the community of the Gold Coast.
<i>John Hardy OAM</i> Far North Queensland	AD 2017	For service to veterans and their families.
<i>David Jackson OAM</i> Townsville	AD 2007	For service to the community of the Burdekin Shire, particularly through the Rotary Club of Home Hill and as a journalist.
<i>Megan McNicholl OAM</i> Darling Downs	AD 2007	For service to education as an advocate for improved services in rural and remote areas, and to the community by raising public awareness of issues affecting women.
<i>Judy Peters OAM</i> Wide Bay Burnett	AD 2022	For service to local government, and to the community of Bundaberg.
<i>Dr Wallace Taylor OAM</i> Central Queensland	AD 2016	For service to the information technology sector, and to rural development.

Legend - AD = Australia Day; QB = Queen's Birthday



## The Order of Australia Association QUEENSLAND BRANCH



### THE BENEFITS OF BEING A MEMBER

- The opportunity to mix, make new friends, network (social interaction) with other fellow Australians who have also been honoured in your region and interstate.
- A greater opportunity to wear your medals and influence others to volunteer in communities.
- The opportunity to unexpectedly meet up with people you have known in other areas of your life.
- Access to places of interest not generally open to the public.
- Access to interesting and stimulating speakers.
- Social support and fun.
- The opportunity to see the best of our State and Territory Capitals at a National Conference.
- Receive 'The Order' national magazine quarterly in e-version or hard copy.
- Ability to participate and give further service to the community.
- Ability to attend various functions such as Annual Dinners, special events, lunches and morning teas in various branches and regions.
- Opportunity for Philanthropy by supporting scholarships helping promising young Australians to achieve their potential through The Order of Australia Association Foundation.
- Opportunity to celebrate and foster aspirations in our young emerging leaders through our Secondary Schools Citizenship Awards program.
- Opportunity to celebrate and honour our Senior Volunteers through our Senior Volunteer Awards program

. [This list is not exhaustive.]



#### FOR DETAILS ON HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER

Visit our website at

<https://www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/membership/>



*To celebrate and promote outstanding Australian citizenship.*