

ORDER OF AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION QUEENSLAND BRANCH



QUEENSLAND BRANCH CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT - 2011



**To be presented by
Professor Tony Webber AM,
Chairman, Queensland Branch**

**For presentation at the
32nd Annual General Meeting**

6:30pm – Monday 21 November 2011

**The Captains' Room, The Pavilion, 1 Bogan
Street, Breakfast Creek**

Order of Australia Association, Queensland Branch Annual Report - 2011

It is my pleasure to present the thirty-first Annual Report of the Queensland Branch of the Order of Australia Association, in this my first year as Chairman of the Queensland Branch.

Many of you will know that while I have been a member of the Association since 1993, I came to the role of your Chairman without the experience of having been on the Branch Committee. Never- the-less, with wise counsel from continuing members and the enthusiasm of new, I believe we have taken the Branch forward with a bright future for the year ahead.

The following are some of the highlights of a busy year.

1. The Queensland Branch Committee for 2011/2012

The 31st Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 19 November 2010 will be remembered for the number of key vacancies that existed at the end of the meeting. Significantly the meeting was unable to deliver a Chairman or a Secretary. However Royce Voss OAM continued as Treasurer and provided the link with the previous Committee at the executive level to help guide the new Committee's direction.

At the first meeting convened by Royce on 10 December 2010 I accepted an invitation to attend and subsequently accepted the position of Chairman. I am personally grateful that Geoff Cowles OAM stepped up from his newly elected position as a member of the Committee to take on the heavy load of Secretary.

The following is a summary of the Office Bearers and Committee elected or appointed for the 2010/2011 year.

Chairman: *Professor Tony Webber AM* – appointed first meeting after the AGM on 15 December 2010.

Immediate Past Chairman: *Mick Davis AM.*

Secretary: *Geoff Cowles OAM* – appointed first meeting after the AGM on 15 December 2010 as Secretary after being elected a Committee member at the AGM on 19 November 2010.

Treasurer: *Royce Voss OAM* re-elected at the AGM on 19 November 2010

Members of the Committee

Adjunct Professor Mary Mahoney AO; Associate Professor John Harden AM; Bruce Howden OAM; Phillip Blakey OAM; and Raymond Young OAM were elected at the AGM on 19 November 2010. In February 2011 *John Harden AM* was appointed as Vice Chairman.

At the first meeting after the AGM on 15 December 2010 *Air Vice Marshall Bill Collins AO* and *Paul McNally OAM* were appointed as additional members of the Committee.

At the first meeting after the AGM on 15 December 2010 the Committee appointed *Dina Browne AO* as a co-opted member for matters relating to the 2011 secondary schools citizenship awards program.

There were nine meetings throughout the year with 8 held in the boardroom of Clinical Network Services (CNS) Pty Ltd at Toowong. Meetings were well attended throughout the year.

2. The Luncheons to celebrate with recipients of awards in the Order of Australia

The two luncheons organized were a departure from the evening receptions at the Parliamentary Annex that the Association had arranged for recipients and their families and friends in past years. Members, who have been regular attendees at past evening receptions, thought this lunch format was a positive step together with the benefit that they could drive to the event in the daytime without car parking difficulties.

2.1 The Luncheon to celebrate with recipients of awards in the 2011 Australia Day Honours

Ninety-seven people attended the lunch for Australia day 2011 recipients held at the Botanical Cafe in the grounds of Mount Coot-tha Botanic Gardens on Wednesday 25 May. Attendance was made up of 14 recipients and their guests together with members and their guests. While the Botanical provided an excellent venue on this occasion, the dining room was at capacity and your committee decided to seek a new venue for future occasions.

2.2 The Luncheon to celebrate with recipients of awards in the 2011 Queens Birthday Honours

Fourteen of 43 recipients of Order of Australia Awards in this year's Queen's Birthday honours were special guests at our Luncheon on 28 September 2011 at Broncos Leagues Club in Red Hill, Brisbane. Ninety people attended the event including the recipients, their families and friends and twenty-two members and their guests. The Broncos put on a splendid lunch for the Association and all round the venue proved ideal for our purpose.

It is pleasing to report that these two events resulted in 42 of this year's 107 recipients taking our membership of the Association.

3. 2011 Secondary Schools Citizenship Awards

Over 150 people attend the 13th annual Presentation of awards comprising secondary school students, family members, education representatives and

OAA members from across Queensland. The event was held on Friday 16 September at Parliament House in Brisbane. This was an unprecedented number of guests and necessitated extra seating in the Red Chamber! Guest of Honour, Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AC, Governor of Queensland, presented 14 students with their medallions and Certificates of Merit, and Awards sponsor, Mr Peter Honeycombe presented Certificates of Community Service to ten local students. Nominations had been received for 60 students. This year Bruce Howden OAM, a Branch Committee member, was added to the judging panel which also included Dr Bruce Cook OAM, Ms Sallyanne Freney, and Mrs Dina Browne AO. The event was again well coordinated by Professor Klaus Bremhorst AM with help provided where necessary by the Branch Committee.

The Association is indebted to the continued generosity of Peter Honeycombe from Honeycombes Property Group in again sponsoring the event this year.

4. Brisbane morning teas

This year we organized two successful morning teas.

The first was at the United Service Club in the Brisbane CBD with Guest speaker Simon Newcomb OAM on 17 May with 26 in attendance. Simon dealt briefly with his own distinguished rowing career, to concentrate on his dream to making the sport of rowing available to all children regardless of the school they attend or what socio-economic area they live in. He also told of the tremendous community support that followed the rowing boat shed being inundated in the January floods. This was a most thought provoking talk for the members present.

The second morning tea on 20 October was a visit to the Institute of Molecular Science at the University of Queensland at St Lucia, one of Australia's premier scientific centres. Twenty-five members and guests were treated to a rare insight into new approaches to designing new drugs and how understanding the structure of the genome will lead to personalized treatments.

5. The Branch Newsletter – The Bulletin

Paul McNally OAM who this year joined the committee and agreed to be Editor, has revitalized the Bulletin. It is now a very classy full colour, six fold publication with its vastly improved format. The Association is pleased that Derek Jones of Jones-Hall Consulting has been engaged to provide the formatting for the Bulletin as well as a professional proof reading service.

There were three editions in 2011 in March, August and October. The pleasing aspect is that Paul has been well supplied with material for these Bulletins and for each edition has been in the position of having to decide what to leave out rather than appeal for copy.

While the costs of the Bulletin have increased the Committee believes that the better format will win handsome dividends in the longer term.

I am also very indebted to Michael Rayner AM of Cox Rayner Architects for their ongoing sponsorship of the front page of the Bulletins. The money this generates goes towards offsetting the extra production costs associated with the publication.

6. Regional Group activities

While the Queensland Branch provided some excellent events in Brisbane, events organized by our regional groups provide a great service to members throughout the year.

A summary of some of the events are:

6.1 Darling Downs Regional Group – Convener: Paul McNally OAM

- **20 May 2011 – Morning Tea** – Town and Country Club, Toowoomba. 40 members and guests. Guest speaker – Rod Stirling AM speaking about his United States’ experiences studying innovative farm techniques. This was an enjoyable morning tea which I attended with my wife Valerie representing the Branch Committee.
- **14 October 2011 – Morning Tea** – Town and Country Club, Toowoomba. 42 members and guests. Guest speaker Karl Hertle OAM who spoke on his work establishing Life Education Queensland. Secretary Geoff and his wife Charyl represented the Branch Committee at this event.

6.2 Gold Coast Regional Group – Convener; Air Vice Marshall Bill Collins AO (Retd)

- **28 June 2011 – Lunch at the Southport Golf Club** – 42 members and guests. Guest speaker Professor Errol Maquire AM RFD who spoke about his life as a surgeon and his military experiences. Secretary Geoff and his wife Charyl represented the Branch Committee at this event.
- **29 October 2011 – Annual Garden Party** – “Jabiru”, Mudgeeraba, the home of John Kearney AM QC and Mrs Alison Kearney – 29 members and guests. Entertainment from All Saints Anglican College Strings Quartet. This was another opportunity for me to represent the Branch Committee with my wife Valerie. Bruce Howden OAM from the Committee also attended.

6.3 Bundaberg Regional Group – Convener: Kevin Gould OAM

- **12 March 2011 – Social event** – 53 members and guests. Guest speaker Dr Henry Ung OAM speaking about his medical practice of 42 years in Gayndah.
- **16 July 2011 – Lunch at Federal hotel, Mt Perry** – 38 members and guests. This was another event that my wife and I were very warmly welcomed and I provided the guest speaker spot.

6.3 Central Queensland Regional Group – Convener: Ray Young OAM

- **5 September 2011 - Capricornia 'Improving our Community' Awards Presentation and Lunch** – Rockhampton Leagues Club. Members and guests witnessed the presentations by Grade 8,9 & 10 students from state and private schools . I was pleased to attend with my wife Valerie, to present certificates and awards and to be their Lunch speaker

6.5 Townsville Regional Group – Convener: Neil Weekes AM MC

- **10 September 2011 – Annual Dinner.** 31 members and guests. Guest speaker – Dr Vic Callanan AM, Senior Staff Anesthetist at Townsville Hospital who spoke on the growth of medicine in the Townsville region.

6.6 Far North Queensland Regional Group – Convener: Deidre Ford AM

The Far North Queensland regional group was unable to arrange any events this year.

6.7 Sunshine Coast Regional Group - Convener: Lorraine Marsh OAM

28 July 2011 - Christmas in July Lunch – Tranquil Park, Maleny. 56 members and guests attended this event organized by the Branch Committee due to the retirement of Malcolm McDonald OAM, the previous convener. The Branch Committee had the aim in mind to seek out a local member to take on the role of convener. I am pleased that Lorraine Marsh OAM has agreed to be convener and will commence organizing events next year after she receives some guidance and training from the Committee. I was very pleased to be the guest speaker at this event. It was also pleasing that quite a number of Brisbane based members attended to give support to the Group.

7 Representations at Government House Brisbane

7.1 The Order of Australia Award Investitures

The Association ensured that it was represented at all 8 Investitures carried out by Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AC, Governor of Queensland for 2011 Australia Day Awards during late May 2011 and Queen's Birthday Awards during late September 2011. It was an honour and a privilege for me to meet so many wonderful Australians who were presented with their awards at four of the Investitures. Committee members who represented the Association at other Investitures were Geoff Cowles OAM; Ray Young OAM; Paul McNally OAM and Phillip Blakey OAM.

Neil Weekes AM MC represented the Association at the North Queensland Investiture held in Townsville for Queen's Birthday recipients of awards during September 2011.

7.2 Government House Open Days

Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AC, Governor of Queensland again hosted two Open Days at Government House. The Association was represented on Australia Day and on 5 June 2011 to celebrate Queensland Day.

Our display on both occasions was in the Investiture Room and included some public power-point presentations on the Order of Australia and the Honours system presented by Mick Davis AM. Throughout both days we were kept busy answering questions on a range of topics including the nomination process, the role of the Association and the distinction between the various awards.

8 Branch activity at national level

My wife, Valerie, and I had the pleasure of attending the National Conference in Hobart on 10-11 February and I my first National Board meeting as your Branch Chairman on the 9th. The Conference was excellent and a credit to the hard working members of the Tasmanian Branch. The conference marked the end of four year tenure as National Chairman by Dina Browne AO for which she was formally acknowledged as was Mick Davis AM for his service on the National Board.

I also represented the Branch at the National Board Directors' meeting in Sydney held in October where issues relating to the governance of the Association were addressed. It was also good to meet other Branch Chairmen and gain an understanding of their specific Branch issues as well as the National Committee at this meeting.

9 Closing remarks

In concluding this report I wish to express my gratitude to the Branch Committee Members and Regional Conveners for their support and encouragement. A heavy work load in any organization falls on the Secretary and Treasurer and this is certainly true for our Branch of the Association and both Treasurer Royce and Secretary Geoff bring to their roles a degree of professionalism rarely seen in a voluntary organization.

However, special mention must be made of Secretary Geoff who like me, came to the role without the benefit of Branch Committee experience and he has done a remarkable job. This has made my job a pleasure and for which I am most grateful.

AJ (Tony) Webber AM PhD Chairman



Secondary Schools Citizenship Awards Presentation – Parliament House , Brisbane – the 14 Students who received medallions pose With Her Excellency, Ms Penelope Wensley AC, Governor of Queensland (centre); Tony Webber AM, Chairman (left) and Dina Browne AO (right)



One of the two Open Days attended at Government House in 2011 – Here Mick Davis AM is talking about the Australian honours system

A selection of pictorial highlights – 2011



Regional Group events were prominent in 2011 – The Bundaberg Group members at their 12 March lunch.



Our Central Qld Regional Group's "Improving our Community" Student Award winners – at Rockhampton during September. .Ray Young OAM (Group Convener) on left and Tony Webber AM, Chairman (right)



Our two Recipient lunches in 2011 were very successful. On parade here are Australia day recipients at the Botanical in May flanked by Geoff Cowles OAM, Secretary (far left) and John Harden AM, Vice Chairman and Tony Webber AM, Chairman (far right).