

# The Order of Australia Association

## NSW Branch Newsletter

### December 2024



Patron: Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of NSW

PO Box 561, Parramatta, NSW 2124 | [www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/nsw](http://www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/nsw)



**From your NSW Chairman**  
**John Gullotta AM**

Dear NSW Members,

Since being elected as Chairman earlier this year, I have had the pleasure and the privilege of meeting and getting to know some of our fellow esteemed award recipients, who are incredible Human beings and often unsung individuals involved in charity, voluntary and community organisations.

At Christmas time especially, it is truly heartening to know that there are so many people within our community who are giving their time and energy to help others who are less fortunate and to make where we live a better place, knowing that if you are alone, there are organisations like this to reach out to such as St Vincent de Paul, The Salvation Army, The Rev Bill Crews Foundation, Wayside Chapel and many other Community and Church groups.

This is very important during the holiday season as some people are isolated, alone and have no family or friends around them. I urge you to reach out to anyone you know in this situation and include them in your family celebrations so they are not alone.

Christmas is a wonderful time of the year – offering the chance to catch up with friends, loved ones and our families. For me it is also a time to reflect on what has been a busy year for the NSW Branch.

Our Christmas Luncheon was held on the 30th November 2024 in the Cellos Grand Dining Room at the Castlereagh Boutique Hotel. Our Deputy Chair and NSW 2025 Local Hero, Martha Jabour OAM was our guest speaker.

We will also be holding our 2025 Annual Australia Day Harbour Cruise Luncheon aboard MV Captain Cook III.



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This is always a well enjoyed day on our beautiful Sydney Harbour and tickets sell fast so please book your tickets via the link. It includes a 3 course seated meal including soft and alcoholic drinks and front row seats of the festivities on Sydney Harbour, so it is very good value.

The NSW Branch is attending as many regional events as possible and a sincere thank you to our Regional Director, David North OAM and our Hon. Secretary, Dianne North OAM for representing the NSW Branch in our regions, the lifeblood of our Association throughout regional and remote NSW.

Preparations are well under way for the Sydney Conference May 1-4th 2025 which also marks 50 years of The Order of Australia Awards. Registrations are coming in fast, so please register early to avoid missing out on the Welcome reception and Farewell Lunch as spaces are limited. There is more information and a link on our OAA National Website. We are now working on securing some very dynamic and motivating speakers and we will let you know more once names are confirmed.

I would like to sincerely thank the sponsors that have already come on board for their generous support. **Our Gold sponsors are LSH Auto Australia, ABAL Banking and HSBC. Our Silver sponsors are Stanmore Mazda and DeLorenzo Australian Made Haircare.** We are looking for more company and individual sponsors so please contact me if you can help in any way.

I would like to thank all the hardworking NSW Branch Committee members for their support and tireless dedication throughout the year and I look forward to a bigger and better 2025!

I hope to see you at our upcoming Australia Day Cruise Luncheon on 26th Jan 2025.

On behalf of the NSW Branch Committee, I would like to wish you all a happy, joyful and peaceful Christmas Holiday Season and a prosperous, healthy New Year!

Kind regards

*John*

**Dr John Gullotta AM**

NSW Chairman

Email: [chairnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au](mailto:chairnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au) | Mobile: 0418 233 069



We are currently looking for sponsors and partners for our 2025 National Conference in Sydney.

These can be companies but also individuals are welcome to be a sponsor.

If you would like to be involved in sponsoring this milestone event, or know someone that can, then please contact the Conference Convenor,

Dr John Gullotta AM on [chairnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au](mailto:chairnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au) for further details and a sponsorship package.



## From your NSW National Director David North OAM

As 2024 comes to a rapid end we have the last Board meeting for the year next week.

I will provide a full report in the next Newsletter.

Nominations for the position of National Membership Director will be called for in 2025 and any member who may be interested in nominating should commence researching this position.

The conferences for Sydney in 2025 and Darwin in 2026 were discussed and the National Board was pleased with the progress on SYD25 and over 170 registrations so far.

The National Audit and Risk committee will shortly release a draft for consideration by Branches and their regional groups for comment on Working with Children policies and procedures.

Social media planning is still underway and the release of policies and procedures for consideration has been delayed.

Kathy Wooldridge has requested assistance from members of the Order of Australia Association to put together a history of the Association ready for the 50th anniversary in 2030. Please let me know if you have any special stories and photos that Kathy can use.

Kind regards

*David*

**David North OAM**

NSW Branch Nominated Director

Email: [dirnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au](mailto:dirnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au)

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## New Members

The Order of Australia Association NSW Branch welcomes the following new members and we look forward to meeting you at our upcoming events.

**Dist Professor Andre M Renzaho** OAM  
**Councillor De-Anne Douglas** OAM  
**Mrs Judith Oyston** OAM  
**Dr Brendan S Casey** AM

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## Upcoming NSW Branch Events

### 2025 AUSTRALIA DAY CRUISE & LUNCHEON

**Sunday 26th January 2025**

**ABOARD CAPTAIN COOK III**

**BOOK NOW - <https://www.stickytickets.com.au/QELJA>**





THE  
ORDER OF AUSTRALIA  
ASSOCIATION

# National Conference Sydney 2025

## Conference Program

### THURSDAY 1st MAY

- ✓ ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION AT SOFTEL SYDNEY WENTWORTH
- ✓ BOARD/BRANCH CHAIRS MEETING
- ✓ WELCOME RECEPTION AT NSW GOVERNMENT HOUSE

### FRIDAY 2nd MAY

- ✓ ARRIVAL & REGISTRATION FOR CONFERENCE
- ✓ WELCOME TO COUNTRY & OFFICIAL OPEN
- ✓ ORATION & KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
- ✓ PANEL DISCUSSIONS
- ✓ EVENING EVENT TBC

### SATURDAY 3rd MAY

- ✓ ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND MEMBERS' FORUM
- ✓ AFTERNOON AT LEISURE / OPTIONAL TOURS
- ✓ CONFERENCE DINNER & FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTATIONS

### SUNDAY 4th MAY

- ✓ WREATH LAYING CEREMONY
- ✓ FAREWELL LUNCH AND HANDOVER TO DARWIN

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**FOR A SPECIAL EARLY BIRD RATE**

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*Celebrating 50 years of The Order of Australia*

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NOW**



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**SCAN FOR  
EARLY BIRD  
SPECIAL RATE**

# JOIN US AT SYD25

# Thank you to our generous SYD25 sponsors

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# The Order of Australia Association e/News Bulletin November 2024

## FIVE NEW ORDER OF AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION SCHOLARS ANNOUNCED



Left to right: Jennifer Corderoy; Ayman Miazhi; The Governor-General, Her Excellency, the Hon. Sam Mostyn AC; Matthew Selkrig; Jade Harrison; Paris Lay-Yee and Dr Helen Nugent AC, Chairman of the Order of Australia Association Foundation

On 24 November 2024, The Governor-General, Her Excellency, the Hon. Sam Mostyn AC, announced five new Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholars following a Round Table Conference at Admiralty House.

The five Scholars who are each in their second year of university study are:

- **Jennifer Corderoy:** University of New England, undertaking a Bachelor of Rural Science in Agriculture. The Scholarship was donated by Mr Tim Fairfax AC.
- **Jade Harrison:** University of Technology Sydney, undertaking a Bachelor of Midwifery. The Scholarship was donated by the NSW Branch of the Order of Australia Association.
- **Paris Lay-Yee:** University of Technology Sydney, undertaking a Bachelor of Communication (Strategic Communication), Bachelor of Laws. The Scholarship was donated by the Order of Australia Association.
- **Ayman Miazhi:** Monash University, undertaking a Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) with a specialisation in Aerospace Engineering. The Scholarship was donated by the Victorian Branch of the Order of Australia Association.
- **Matthew Selkrig:** University of Sydney, undertaking a Bachelor of Commerce and a Bachelor of Advanced Studies. The Scholarship was donated by Mr Paul Wheelton AM KSJ, who is also a Director of the Order of Australia Association Foundation.

For further information please access the Order of Australia Association Foundation Website:

<https://oaafoundation.org.au/>

Kathy Wooldridge OAM  
National Membership Director

# KING'S BIRTHDAY 24 NEW RECIPIENTS' WELCOME RECEPTION

## NSW PARLIAMENT HOUSE - 11th November 2024

The Order of Australia Association NSW 2024 King's Birthday New Recipients Reception was held on the 11th November at NSW Parliament House.

NSW Chairman, **Dr John Gullotta AM** extended a warm welcome to the 33 King's Birthday 2024 (KB24) new recipients present together with their family and friends.

Being a special day, Remembrance Day, KB24 New Recipient, **Brigadier Brendan Casey AM** was asked to recite the Ode followed by a minute silence.

Dr Gullotta continued "We are a much smaller and cosier number this year as 38% less awards were given this year compared to previous years due to a new computer nomination system being implemented and we have been assured that the process will be faster in future.

This event is an opportunity for our Association to celebrate your great achievements. Every year I am truly amazed by the extremely high caliber of recipients that are honored and all of you here today are certainly no exception. You come from all walks of life, a myriad of professions and of course the quiet achievers working away in your local communities especially in rural and remote parts of NSW. All of you have an unique and special story that you should be very proud of and that we acknowledge and honour here today.

I would like to welcome and thank **Stephanie Di Pasqua MP**, member for Drummoyne for being our parliamentary host and **Prof Tracey O'Brien AM**, NSW Chief Cancer Officer, Chief Executive Officer of the Cancer Institute NSW and NSW KB24 New Recipient, for agreeing to be our special guest speaker. Prof O'Brien AM is a globally recognised Oncologist and researcher, actively engaged in the forefront of cancer care. She was made a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to cancer medicine, to medical research and education, and to professional bodies. Tracey was "in conversation" with NSW Branch Committee Member **Sophie Scott OAM** who with 20 plus years as an award-winning medical TV journalist for the ABC, is now an international speaker and educator with expertise in mental health and wellbeing. Sophie received an Order Of Australia Medal for her service to broadcast media, and to community health.

As you all know, membership is the lifeblood of any organization. So if you are not a member of the association please join so you can help us to celebrate and promote outstanding citizenship! Next year we will also be holding member networking events at no cost so fellow awardees can meet and exchange stories." Dr Gullotta said.



**Brigadier Brendan Casey AM**



**Prof Tracey O'Brien AM with Sophie Scott OAM**

Dr Gullotta then called upon a very special lady and KB24 New recipient, **Sister Helen Merrin OAM** to say Grace.

Sister Merrin OAM is St Lucy's School's Chaplain, where she has been working for over 30 years including when they were a school for students with vision impairments. Sr Helen has been a Dominican Sister for 60 years, she became blind as an adult, and subsequently developed a significant hearing impairment and now uses cochlear implants in both ears. She continues to inspire our community with her dedication to Catholic education and special needs children. "We are all so proud of your achievements and honoured that you are saying Grace for us today", Dr Gullotta said.

Our Hon Secretary, **Dianne North OAM** proposed a Toast to the New Recipients which was followed by a Toast to the Order of Australia Association on behalf of all the KB24 New recipients by **His Honour Judge Rolf Driver AM**.

Judge Driver AM was a Judge of the Federal Court of Australia and Family Court of Australia before his retirement in August 2022. Prior to being appointed Judge he was a Senior Government Solicitor at the Australian Government. He is the former Chair of the Australian Chapter of the International Association of Refugee and Migration Judges and is a KB24 Order of Australia New Recipient.

Our Hon. Treasurer **Mrs Louise Paisley OAM**, extended thanks to Judge Driver AM on behalf of the Association and then proceeded to give the Loyal Toast to The King. It was a most enjoyable luncheon with excellent networking between all new recipients who exchanged life stories and memories with friends and family.



**Sister Helen Merrin OAM with Freddie**



**His Honour Judge Rolf Driver AM**



**King's Birthday 24 New Recipients**



# NSW Branch Christmas Luncheon

## 30th November 2024

The NSW Branch held its annual Christmas Luncheon in the beautiful Cellos Grand Dining room at the Castlereagh boutique hotel.

NSW Branch Chairman, **Dr John Gullotta AM**, extended a warm welcome to all members and honours recipients present as well as their family and guests. He especially welcomed the guest speaker **Martha Jabour OAM**, recently named our 2025 NSW Local Hero and who is also our NSW Branch Deputy Chair. "We are all very proud of Martha and her achievements" he said. Her introduction read:

*Martha Jabour OAM helped establish the Homicide Victims Support Group in 1993 to care for families and friends of homicide victims throughout NSW.*

*It provides life-changing counselling, support and referrals to more than 4,200 members.*

*Using her experience across grief, trauma, policy development, strategic planning and crisis management, in 2013, Martha developed a vision for a world-first trauma recovery facility for those impacted by homicide.*

*She inspired politicians, public servants, community organisations and others to raise funds, while land for the facility was donated by Blacktown City Council and the Western Sydney Parklands Trust. Grace's Place opened in 2023.*

*In April 2024, Grace's Place provided care for the overseas families of the victims of a Sydney shopping centre attack, including accommodation, counselling and funeral assistance.*

*Martha is also a community member representative on the NSW State Parole Authority, representing the families of homicide victims once an inmate becomes eligible for parole.*

*She was recently named 2025 NSW Local Hero.*

Martha gave a very moving account of her achievements and work over the years that led to the opening of Grace's Place as well as her recognition for all her hard work, devotion and dedication to the cause of victims of homicide and also the community at large.



**Guest Speaker Martha Jabour OAM addressing the audience**



**Immediate past Chairman  
Mr Jim Mein AM saying Grace**

**The Cello's Grand Dining room  
at the Castlereagh Boutique Hotel**

Dr Gullotta went on to say, "Today is an opportunity for members and guests to celebrate the beginning of the Christmas season but also to raise money for the Order of Australia Association Foundation. The Foundation supports our next generation of leaders by helping promising young Australians to achieve their potential for the benefit of future generations of Australians. It represents an investment in Australia's future.

The Scholarship programme aims to identify full-time students in their second year of university who are exceptional in their field of study, who have given back to the community, and who can benefit from the financial support provided by the Scholarship. It is hoped these students have the potential to become future awardees of the Order of Australia. The recipient receives \$40,000 paid over two years. For the students selected, the value of the Scholarship is life changing. In addition, the recipient receives mentorship from a member of the Order of Australia in the student's area of expertise and career ambition. Winners have described this as having a benefit beyond money. The scholarship is highly regarded not just by the recipients but also by the universities that we work with.

That prestige is enhanced by the presentation of the Scholarship awards by the Governor-General at the National Conference Gala Dinner of which the next one will be in Sydney on the 3rd May 2025. By next year, 60 scholarships will have been awarded since inception. Our NSW Branch has committed to donating a Scholarship as hosts of the National Conference and are most delighted to support this worthy cause."

The audience was entertained by pianist, Jason Xuong from the University of Sydney Piano Society, with Christmas Carols sung by vocalist Cana. Everyone had a fantastic afternoon of networking and engaging conversations. It was a great start to the festive holiday season!







## From your Regional Group Co-ordinator David North OAM

### ***Around the regions***

#### **FAR SOUTH COAST REGIONAL GROUP - Report by Jan E. Phillips AM, Convenor**

This group has a proud history of introducing recent Awardees in its area to those recognised previously. This is done in a semi-formal way, usually in a private room at a club or other suitable venue, where a light luncheon is served.

The most recent function was held on Thursday 20th November in a beautiful outdoor function area in the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens, a wonderful setting, made more significant by the fact that all the initial work was done by a dedicated group of volunteers.

The nucleus/Executive/ Working Party of this Far South Coast Group comprises five people only: President Jan Phillips AM, previous long serving President Dr Jenny Munro AM, Secretary & Treasurer Christine (Kris) Macauley AM, Mary Atkinson OAM and Peter Atkinson OAM.

A problem, not insurmountable, for this Group is the geography of its designated area; a long, narrow strip between the mountains and the sea, from Batemans Bay to the Victorian border, making centralised meetings to which most Awardees can come, difficult. To this end, the Famous Five have decided to hold two functions a year following the Australia Day and King's Birthday announcements, one at the northern, and the other, the southern end of our region respectively. Some Members in the southern area are willing to join our small working group which is pleasing and positive for the future.

Two recent Awardees Richard Adams OAM and Michael Fay OAM attended our function at the Botanic Gardens and, as usual, their stories were most interesting and informative. Neither is sitting back on his laurels with Richard continuing his valued Community work in Mogo and Michael continuing his work focusing on International Relations and Education primarily in Asia.

For several years the Far South Coast Group sponsored young people on the sailing ship the Young Endeavour and the responses from the recipients were gratifying indeed. These young people presented at our meetings held after their return and their excitement was palpable. They all claimed it was the most wonderful, and at times, challenging experience of their lives and of course, this has been the whole idea.

Sadly, this option is no longer available for our Group to support. We are endeavouring to encourage new Awardees to become Members of the Association but feel we do require a regional purpose which would entice them to join. Otherwise, it is simply a cup of tea, light refreshments, well done, see you later, not the sort of function to which well-motivated, energetic people would be attracted.

# OAA Illawarra Luncheon

Friday 22nd November 2024

**Report by Dianne North OAM**

On Friday 22nd November, 43 OAA members, family and friends gathered at Warilla Sporties Club for a luncheon to celebrate the achievements of the King's Birthday awardees.

**Prof. Kathleen Clapham AM** for service to indigenous health.

**Dr Kathleen Eager AM** for service to health research.

**Prof Lisa Kervin AM** for service to tertiary education.

**Mr Gregory Crofts OAM** for service to youth through scouting.

**Mr Kenneth Forbes OAM** for service to lawn bowls.

**Dist. Prof. Stuart Kaye OAM** for service to international law.

**Mrs Helen Pittman OAM** for service to the community.

Representing the OAA NSW Committee was The Reverend Dr Geoffrey Glassock AM who gave the Grace. Rod Gibb OAM, Convenor for the Shoalhaven Region also joined us to acknowledge the new awardees.

We were delighted to have **Ms Bailey Campbell** attend. Bailey was a recipient of the OAA Youth Community Service Awards which were presented at Government House in October. Bailey spoke about her accomplishments to date. Bailey is a school captain, senior mentor and SRC leader at Warilla High School. Bailey initiated a school and community blood drive and recruited community members to further promote it through social media. The outcome was a significant boost to vital blood supplies. Bailey has also worked with Sonder Youth which is a youth based South Coast charity focused on improving youth mental health through positive action. Pictured with her family below right.

**Lindsay May OAM** (pictured below left) was the guest speaker. He was accompanied by his wife Tania Mace. Lindsay and Tania now live in Lane Cove, but he had everyone enthralled as he spoke about his growing up in the Illawarra, his successes in Surf Club and his participation in yacht racing around the world. Lindsay holds the record of competing in 50 consecutive Sydney Hobart Yacht Races. His son and grandson now compete with him.

This luncheon was also the Region's AGM, where all current committee members were returned.



# In Memoriam

We remember our members that have recently passed as well as their selfless service and the significant contribution they made to our community.



***“Forever in our hearts”***

**Mr William T Moyes OAM**  
**Mrs Dawn L Ferguson OAM**



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## Order of Australia Merchandise

The November edition of the Order displayed the range of merchandise available. A tip to save on postage and handling is for regional groups to place a group buy and reduce and spread the postage and handling costs. As advertised on page 21, P & H: Multiple items will be put in one postage pack where possible.

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To see the **SYD25 NATIONAL CONFERENCE VIDEO**  
click on the link below:

**[CLICK HERE TO SEE THE SYD 25 PROMOTIONAL VIDEO](#)**

*On behalf of our Chairman and the NSW Branch Committee*



*Thank you for reading!*