

# ACT OAA

## APRIL 2025 NEWSLETTER

### Branch Patron

Dr Sue Packer AO

### Branch Nominated Director

MAJGEN Michael Crane DSC and Bar AM

### Chair

Andrew Phelan AM

Chairact@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

0417 267 609 (M)

### Secretary

Robert Altamore OAM

altamr@bigpond.com

0423 931 753 (M)

### Treasurer

Phil Morrall AM, CSC

### Committee

Lynne Duckham OAM

Mainul Haque OAM

Greg Hood AO

Dr Joseph Johnson CSC, OAM, AAM

Prof Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt AO

Julie Long OAM

David Templeman AM

Desmond Woods OAM

### Branch website

[www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/ACT](http://www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/ACT)

### COMING EVENTS

**Wednesday 21 May 2025**  
**New Recipient Reception**  
**Royal Canberra Golf Club**  
**Yarralumla**

**Wednesday 11 June 2025**  
**King's Birthday Lunch**  
**Royal Canberra Golf Club**  
**Yarralumla**

### RECEPTION FOR NEW RECIPIENTS - 21 MAY 2025

Please join us to welcome and celebrate with ACT and area citizens awarded in the 2025 Australia Day Honours. This event will be held at The Royal Canberra Golf Club, Yarralumla on Wednesday 21 May and will follow the investitures to be held at Government House.

Please book at <https://www.stickytickets.com.au/XDG5U> or complete the booking sheet with this newsletter.

Contact for this event is Mr Andrew Phelan AM at 0417 267 609 or chairact@theorderofaustralia.asn.au.

### KING'S BIRTHDAY LUNCHEON WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE 2025

To attend, please book at <https://www.stickytickets.com.au/1G8DC> or complete the enclosed booking form and join us at the Royal Canberra Golf Club, Yarralumla to share fellowship, celebrate the recipients of honours in the King's Birthday list and hear guest speaker **Professor Steve Robson canvas the range of significant health issues within Australia**. Steve was the President of the Australian Medical Association from 2022 to 2024.



He has been practicing medicine for 35 years, starting as a medical officer in the Royal Australian Navy before training as a specialist obstetrician and gynaecologist. Steve currently works with the National Health and Medical Research Council, is Chief Medical Officer for Avant Mutual and passionate about equitable access to healthcare, the economics of preventative care, and the mental health and wellbeing of doctors.

Contact for this event is Mr Andrew Phelan AM at 0417 267 609 or chairact@theorderofaustralia.asn.au.

### 2025 STUDENT CITIZENSHIP AWARDS

Committee members Julie Long OAM, Prof Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt AO and Dr Joe Johnson CSC, OAM, AAM are the new Student awards sub-committee in our Branch. They have begun the 2025 program to seek nominations by the end of the second school term from ACT government and independent schools and colleges for our annual Student Citizenship Awards which are planned to be presented in late August. This program is the main outreach program for the Branch. There were 11 awards presented in 2024.

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## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Fellow Branch Members,

Our 2025 AGM was held on 12 February 2025 at the Royal Canberra Golf Club. I congratulate Professor Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt AO, Mr Greg Hood AO and Ms Julie Long OAM on their election to the Branch Committee and Dr Joe Johnson CSC OAM AAM on his re-election. I am very grateful to all members of the Committee for their diligence and ongoing commitment to the good governance of the Branch. I make special mention of Dr Bill Maiden PSM OAM and Ms Narelle Hargreaves AM, who stepped down from the Committee after many years of service to the Branch, especially in organising and judging of the Student Citizenship Awards. Dr Brian Babington AM also stepped down from the Committee and I wish to thank him for his service to the Branch.

Dr Alan Morison AM resigned as Branch Nominated Director (BND) on 27 November 2024. I was appointed to replace him pro-tem, pending election of a new BND at the Branch AGM. I wish to pay tribute to Alan for his years of quality service to the Association, the board and its committees, including through the most difficult period of COVID. I congratulate Mag-Gen (ret) Michael Crane DSC and Bar, AM on his election as the new BND; Mike will need no introduction as he has previously served with distinction as Branch Chair and Committee member.

Committee member Group Captain (Rtd) Phil Morrall AM, CSC gave an entertaining and comprehensive presentation on the history of the Order of Australia at the Branch AGM. At a morning tea in March, Committee member Mainul Haque OAM presented on 'How the Order of Australia Award has Acknowledged the Services of Multicultural Australia.' These important, thoughtful presentations are available on the Association's website, as explained elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Monica and I are looking forward to attending the National Conference in Sydney in May 2025. We hope to see as many of you there as possible.

Planning is underway for Branch events throughout the year, commencing with the Autumn New Recipients Reception on Wednesday 21 May 2025 and King's Birthday Lunch on Wednesday 11 June 2025.

Warm regards  
Andrew

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## NATIONAL BOARD REPORT

The National Board met via TEAMS Friday 21 February 2025 and details include:

The National Treasurer presented Financial Reports for the period ended 31 December 2024.

The Key aspects of the Reports included:

- Current operating surplus is \$181,468.97;
- The overall surplus incorporating the Portfolio appreciation of \$138,244.37 is \$319,714.34.
- The net equity as at 31 December 2024 was \$1,585,589.15;
- A recommendation that \$45,000 be accrued for a Foundation Scholarship in the name of the Association to be awarded at a future date to be decided;
- The Portfolio valuation was \$1,953,606.79.

The key aspects of the Membership Report included:

- There were 457 Australia Day awards in 2025. This was a 37% drop in the number of awards compared to 2024 where there were 729 Australia Day award recipients. There were 727 Australia day awards in both 2022 and 2023;
  - 'Introducing the Order of Australia' Brochure has been updated;
  - The Governor-General's Office are still working on their plan to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Order of Australia, National Medal, and Bravery Award. All have been included in the Australian Honours and Awards system since 1975;
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- The Governor-General's Office confirmed the Mint and Post office are making commemorative coins and stamps for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of OA;
- Australia Post have issued a First Day Cover (cost \$35) ;

The Honours Secretariat staff indicated that there has been a significant increase in nominations and the transfer of the previous management of nominations to the IT system was an issue, with the secretariat considering a number of ways to improve it.

The key aspects of the Sydney Conference Report were:

- Registrations as of 1 February were: Conference 195, Welcome Reception 182, Gala Dinner 172 and Sunday lunch 179
- By State- ACT 14, NSW 100, NT 3, QLD 25, SA 10, TAS 5, VIC 25 and WA 21;
- Sir Peter Cosgrove AK CVO MC (rtd) has been confirmed as the Oration speaker;
- The possibility of the Governor General hosting a jazz afternoon tea at Admiralty House is to be confirmed;
- There will be a pre-conference light Opera event on Friday night;
- Speakers have been confirmed; and
- Sponsorship of \$30,000 in cash and \$4000 in kind has been received.

The key aspects of the Brisbane 2026 Conference Report were:

- Date 30 April – 3 May 2026;
- Theme 'A Bridge to the Future';
- Rydges Southbank has been selected as the preferred venue for the Conference and a deposit paid on 17 February 2025.

The Strategy Committee Chairman advised the Strategic Plan would be reviewed during 2025 as part of the normal planning process.

The key aspects of the Marketing Report and Social Media Sub-Committee were:

- The national component of an OAA survey of members is to be finalised by the Executive Committee by 31 March for sending to Branches for comment;
- Discussion with the Honour's Secretariat regarding obtaining the age group of recipients;
- Governor General's Communication staff were happy with AD media coverage;
- The NMD is to prepare guidelines for social media management processes to Branch nominated administrators; and
- Changes to Merchandise ordering processes.

The National Chairman presented report for the OAA Foundation Secretary and advised that:

- New scholarships being awarded will be \$45,000, up from \$40,000;
- The cost to a donor increased to \$50,000;
- There are six universities represented in the scholarships to be presented at the NSW Conference in May – Sydney University, UTS x 2, Southern Cross University and Monash University;
- Deloitte has completed their audit and accounts were signed off with no qualifications;
- Surplus YTD is \$1,098,897 including a \$1m donation;
- Investment value as of 11/2/25 was \$4,645,883; and
- Current bank balance is \$33,558.

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We extend condolences to our Branch Secretary Robert Altamore OAM on the recent passing of his wife Wendy.

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## OAA 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE

Branch chair Andrew Phelan AM and committee member Dr Joe Johnson CSC OAM AAM were attendees at the launch of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Order of Australia honours and awards system at Government House on 14 February.



*Madeleine Johnson, Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC, Dr Joe Johnson CSC, OAM, AAM*



*Andrew Phelan AM, Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC*

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## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER FROM THE 2025 AUSTRALIAN DAY HONOURS

**Emeritus Professor Andrew BLAKERS AO** – For distinguished service to science in the field of solar cell development, and as an advocate for energy storage and renewable technologies.

**Professor David HEADON AM** – For significant service to history preservation, as a historian, cultural advisor, and author.

**Group Captain Marija JOVANOVIĆ AM CSM** - For exceptional service to the Royal Australian Air Force in the provision of command and leadership within the Orion AP-3EW maritime patrol capability.

**The Hon Richard REFSHAUGE AM SC** – For significant service to the community of the Australian Capital Territory, and to the arts.

**Dr Peter SAWCZAK AM** – For significant service to international relations through defence and strategic policy development.

**CAPT Douglas GRIFFITHS OAM RAN** – For meritorious service to international engagement for the Australian Defence Force.

**David LUCK OAM** - For service to people with a disability.

## FROM THE 2024 KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

**LTCOL Jane EVANS OAM** – For service to medicine as a general practitioner, and to the community.

## FROM THE 2009 AUSTRALIAN DAY HONOURS

**AVM (Retd) Margaret STAIB AM** - For exceptional service to the Royal Australian Air Force and Australian Defence Force in the field of logistics strategic planning as Director of Logistics Support Agency - Air Force and Director General Strategic Logistics, Joint Logistics Command.

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2025

Over 50 members and guests attended our 2025 Annual General Meeting at the Royal Canberra Golf Club and nominations to the Branch Committee for 2025/26 were approved. Dr Joe Johnson CSC OAM AAM was re-elected to the Committee. New members are Greg Hood AO, Professor Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt AO and Julie Long AM. Retiring members Brian Babbington AM, Narelle Hargreaves AM and Dr Bill Maiden PSM OAM were thanked for their contribution. Former Branch Chair Michael Crane DSC and Bar, AM was nominated to replace Dr Alan Morrison AM as Branch Nominated Director.

### New Branch Committee members:

Professor Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt AO was appointed an Officer in the Order of Australia in 2023 *for distinguished service to natural resource management research and innovation, to gender equality, and to tertiary education*. She delivered the 2024 ANU Order of Australia lecture *A Possible World: Transforming Gender Relations for Sustainability*.



Gregory Hood AO is a former Chief Commissioner and CEO of the Air Transport Safety Bureau Greg was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in January 2023 *for distinguished service to the national transportation and aviation industries, and to the not-for-profit sector* and was guest speaker at our 2023 mid-year luncheon.

Julie Long OAM is ACT Branch President of the Children's Book Council of Australia and had a long association with ACT Branch of Scouts Australia. She was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 1999 *for service to youth in the Australian Capital Territory, particularly through the Children's Book Council of Australia and the scouting movement*.



Following the AGM, guest speaker Phil Morrall AM, CSC, a longstanding Branch member and current Branch Treasurer gave an insightful and topical address on the background to the creation of The Order of Australia honours system, drawing both on a presentation to our Branch by Sir David Smith KCVO, AO in 2004 and his own personal reflections on the Canberra milieu of 1971–78. Phil was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 1987 *for service to the Royal Australian Air Force as a staff officer with the Directorate General of Personnel Services, Air Force Office* and his presentation can be accessed at <https://theorderofaustralia.asn.au/act/events/>



Dr Joe Johnson CSC OAM AAM, Greg Hood AO, Julie Long OAM, Michael Crane DSC and Bar AM



Narelle Hargreaves AM, Trish Keller OAM



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*Peter Waterman OAM, Professor Hilton Kobus AM, Abdul Rahman Hashim OAM*

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## VALE

We regret to advise the recent passing of the following ACT Branch member and pay our respects for his contribution to the Association and the Australian community.

**Mr Max KIMBER AM** - Queen's Birthday 2007 - For service to engineering, through infrastructure and commercial development of the natural gas pipeline industry, and national and international contributions to technical and economic regulatory standards.

**Dr Tomislav GAVRANIC OAM** – Australia Day 2004 - For service to medicine as a general practitioner and through his commitment to addressing the health needs of Aboriginal people and people with alcohol dependency, and to the Croatian community.

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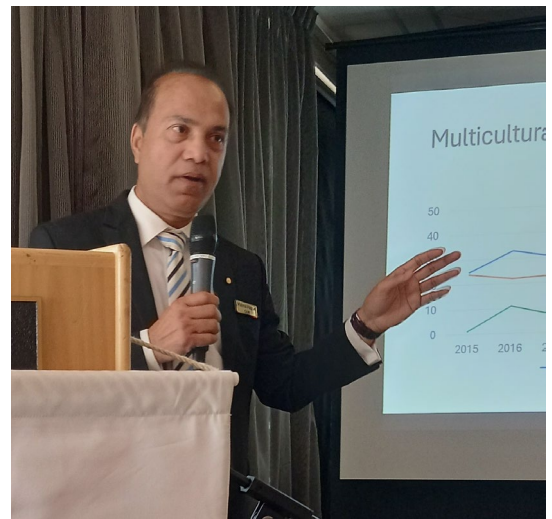
## MORNING TEA WITH MAINUL HAQUE OAM - WEDNESDAY 12 MARCH

Members and guests enjoyed morning tea at the Royal Canberra Golf Club while hearing from guest speaker, ACT Branch committee member Mainul Haque OAM, who discussed how the service of members of the multicultural community have been acknowledged in The Order of Australia and addressed the need to facilitate an increase in awards to deserving multicultural citizens. His presentation and notes are available at <https://theorderofaustralia.asn.au/act/events/>.

Mainul was awarded the Medal in the Order of Australia in the 2023 King's Birthday Honours *for service to the multicultural community of Canberra*.



*Mainul Haque OAM, Brendan Cox*



*Mainul Haque OAM*

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