



# The Order of Australia Association Tasmania Branch

Patron: Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, Governor of Tasmania

## Newsletter June 2025

The Association is delighted to see the following Tasmanians awarded on Australia Day and the King's Birthday Honours Lists. We are also very pleased to welcome a number of these new awardees as members. The new members are marked with an asterisk beside their name. Details are current as at the time this newsletter was finalised. Congratulations to each for their significant contributions to our Australian society.

### Australia Day Awards

**\* The Honourable Duncan Kerr AO**

For distinguished service to the law and social justice, to the Parliament of Australia, and to the people of Tasmania.

**The Honourable Nicholas Sherry AO**

For distinguished service to the Parliament of Australia, to the governance and operation of the superannuation industry, and to the people of Tasmania.

**\* Dr James Markos AM**

For significant service to medical education and research, particularly respiratory and sleep disorders.

**Ms Margaret Putt AM**

For significant service to conservation and the environment, and to the Parliament of Tasmania.

**\* Mrs Joanne Gay Cook OAM**

For service to community mental health.

**Mr Shane Donnelly OAM**

For service to the Parliament of Tasmania.

**Mr David Downie OAM**

For service to the community of Campbell Town.

**\* Mr David Gatenby OAM**

For service to the community of Tasmania.

**\* Ms Margaret Hoban OAM**

For service to the arts, particularly through music.

**Miss Laura-Jude Johnson OAM**

For service to community mental health, and to youth advocacy.

**The Reverend Josephine Pyecroft OAM**

For service to the Anglican Church of Australia.

**\* Miss Angela Russell OAM**

For service to nursing.

**Mr Vlastislav Skvaril OAM**

For service to the community through charitable organisations.

**\* Mrs Denise Talbot OAM**

For service to the community, and to women.

**Mrs Marion Woodward OAM**

For service to the community, and to agriculture.

### King's Birthday Awards

**Mrs Roslyn Irene Cornish AM**

For significant service to early childhood education administration.

**Mr Adrian Sean Kelly AM**

For significant service to the real estate sector in leadership and board roles.

**Dr David Joslyn Law AM**

For significant service to public health as a practitioner and in leadership roles.

**Mr Albert Marcel van Zetten AM**

For significant service to local government, and to the community.

**The late Mr Robert John Allen OAM**

For service to the international community through humanitarian roles.

**Mr Michael Francis Barrenger OAM**

For service to the community of George Town.

**Dr Tonia Gaye Cochran OAM**

For service to conservation and the environment.

**Mr Joseph Cook OAM**

For service to community music.



**The late Mr Peter Charles Cox OAM**

For service to the community of George Town.

**Mrs Mary Elizabeth Koolhof OAM**

For service to education.

**Mr Anthony Ronald Kube OAM**

For service to rugby union.

**Ms Lesley Joyce Kurek OAM**

For service to conservation and the environment.

**Mr Steven Leigh Martin OAM**

For service to the community of Northern Tasmania

**Mr John Leigh McAdam OAM**

For service to lawn bowls.

**The late Mr Reginald Andrew Watson OAM**

For service to history.

**Mr Craig Alexander Webb OAM**

For service to wildlife conservation.

**Mr Donald Wells OAM**

For service to the aviation industry in Tasmania.



Further information about the **2026 Brisbane Conference** will be circulated as it comes to hand. In the meantime, please make a diary note to save the days.

## 2025 National Conference, Sydney

CELEBRATE | MOTIVATE | NOMINATE

*"Inspiring Australian Achievers"*

In May five Tasmanians were among more than 200 members and partners attending the 2025 National Association Conference in Sydney held over a four-day period based at the Sofitel Sydney Wentworth Hotel. The conference commenced on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May with a Welcome Reception at Government House hosted by Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC.

The next day we were treated with hearing 14 amazing speakers, two of whom, **Dr Jordan Nguyen** and **Deborah Wallace APM**, have details shown below with text taken from the Conference booklet.

Saturday commenced with the Association Annual General Meeting followed by the Members' Forum. Following a free afternoon or optionally attend a special service of Choral Evensong at St James' Church to commemorate 50 years of The Order of Australia. In the evening the Gala Dinner with about 300 guests not only enjoyed good food and wine but witnessed the presentations to five brilliant young Australian scholars of the Order of Australia Association Foundation awards by Her Excellency, the NSW Governor.



The Conference concluded on Sunday with a Remembrance Service and wreath laying at HMAS *Katabul* followed by the Farewell Lunch aboard HMAS *Adelaide*, that is described as a Landing Helicopter Docks (LHD) along with sister ship, HMAS *Canberra*, the largest ships ever constructed for the Royal Australian Navy. The ships provide



the Australian Defence Force with one of the most capable and sophisticated air-land-sea amphibious deployment systems in the world.

### Dr Jordan Nguyen



Dr Nguyen is a leading Australian engineer, inventor and innovator, committed to improving as many lives as possible and becoming a driving force behind both human and technological evolution as we move into the future.

An internationally renowned engineer for humanity, Jordan designs life-changing technologies to transform the lives of people with disabilities and the elderly and is Founder and CEO of Psykinetic, a social business creating futuristic, inclusive and empowering technologies to improve independence and quality of life for disability, aged care and beyond.

Dr Jordan and his team have successfully created a mind-controlled wheelchair, numerous Virtual and Augmented reality applications, inclusive gaming, an instrument that enabled a friend with cerebral palsy to perform live music with her eye movements and blinks, and devices that make it possible to control household appliances or even drive cars using only the tiny electrical signals created from eye movements.

Author of the book 'A Human's Guide to the Future', Jordan is also an award-winning documentary maker and presenter. His work is regularly featured in the media. Jordan recently founded his own media company and aims to continue creating world-changing content on the intersection between technology and humanity.

Involved in teaching university engineering masters' students and overseeing PhDs in Artificial Intelligence design and Biomedical instrumentation, Jordan believes our young generations are the change-makers of tomorrow and has the potential to create solutions to the world's greatest challenges.

### Deborah Wallace APM

Deborah Wallace APM is a retired Commander of Task Force Raptor, NSW Police Force.

Deborah joined the NSW Police Force in 1983, starting at the Blacktown station. She gained notoriety early in her career, when she was involved in the investigation into the murder of 26-year-old nurse Anita Cobby.



Despite the police force being a tough place for a woman, Deborah Wallace rose to the top job of Detective Superintendent with grace, humour and an iconic sense of style. In her incredible 36-year career with NSW Police, Wallace took on murderers and drug suppliers and dismantled the State's most nefarious gangs.

Tenacious, perceptive and sharp, Wallace commanded a range of police crime squads, bringing order to the wild west of 1990s Cabramatta and busting criminal bikie gangs with Strike Force Raptor, until her retirement in late 2019. Her inner strength and empathy meant that she was a constant go-to for some of the state's toughest cases, and her poise and compassion earned her a special place in the lives and hearts of her colleagues - and the grudging respect of her criminal foes.

Often referred to as "the gang buster", Detective Superintendent Deborah Wallace, has delved into the dark underbelly of crime investigating and dismantling some of the State's most feared gangs. Throughout a stellar career spanning more than 30 years with NSW Police, Deb has faced murderers, drug manufacturers and extortionists - to name just a few - armed with her trademark heels and colourful suits.

Deborah is the Past Commander of the State Crime Command Gangs Squad and her pragmatic approach, tenacity, sense of humour and ability to separate her work and personal lives, has enabled Deb to thrive in high pressure police operations.



Deborah is a recipient of numerous awards including the Australia Day Achievement Award, the Australian Crime and Prevention Award, and the Australian Police Medal, Deborah is strongly committed to community endeavours and is a long-time supporter of Youth off the Streets.

She is currently the star of the TV series Million Dollar Murders, dissecting Australia's most baffling cold cases.

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## Recent Tasmania Branch Events

Each of the three Regional Groups and the Branch have conducted a number of social functions.

The year started with the **Tasmania Branch** Annual General Meeting in Perth. Following the Members' Forum attendees were treated with a most interesting and revealing talk by Gretta Pecl AM, professor of marine ecology at the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies. Gretta is ranked in the top 200 most influential climate scientists in the world (and the top 20 women) and has a specific expertise in how climate change is resulting in the climate-driven redistribution of life on earth, and she leads several national and international efforts to better understand climate-driven changes to species distributions, including the National multi award-winning citizen science initiative Redmap Australia and the Species on the Move international conference series.

On the day of the investitures at Government House, the Branch hosts a lunch providing a complimentary meal to the attending new awardees. The usual attendance is generally over 70 persons making a significant addition to an already enjoyable and memorable day for everyone.

The **Southern Regional Group** morning teas with guest speakers have been scheduled, the first held in March had guest speaker Judy Tierney OAM, a state and national award-winning journalist with ABC radio and television for over 35 years. Currently, Judy is on the board of Island, Tasmania's most respected literary magazine and is a Leadership Champion with Tasmanian Leaders. She is an extensive traveller having been to over 75 countries.

The next event on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June will be Andy Spate AM whose professional career spans more than 50 years as a research scientist in CSIRO, as a manager of caves and karst in the NSW National Parks and Wildlife service and as a consultant with his own business. Andy has extensive experience in Australia and internationally in the fields of cave and karst research and management, natural resource inventory, landscape rehabilitation, forest firefighting and tourism planning, management, and interpretation.

Email [functiontas@theorderofaustralia.asn.au](mailto:functiontas@theorderofaustralia.asn.au) to book your place. More details on the website.

The **Northern Regional Group** has a Winter Solstice Lunch scheduled for Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> June. The guest speaker will be The Hon. Dr Frank Madill AM who will be talking about "The Winter Solstice".

Contact Betty Laverty OAM by June 10<sup>th</sup>, email at [bettylaverty@gmail.com](mailto:bettylaverty@gmail.com) or phone: 6327 3180.

The Association website has current events listed for all Branches and the Tasmanian page is at <https://theorderofaustralia.asn.au/tas/upcoming-events/>. Whichever event you choose to attend locally or interstate, you will be welcome, after all we belong to a National organisation.

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## Sue Rees OAM [Reprinted from the Northern Region newsletter]



Sue was a most entertaining guest speaker at the Evandale luncheon where she shared some of her early memories of her early life in Launceston. She was born and raised in Invermay. Her first job was in the Accounts Department at the Railway. After that Sue worked for Garrott & Garrott, Chartered Accountants which gave her a good grounding in time management. After that Sue became involved in Tourism and the Hospitality Industry. Sue has a strong background in event management, marketing and promotions working with the Old Tudor Motor Inn, Archers Manor, O'Hara's Resort, Country Club Tasmania and Josef Chromy.





Sue is a Life Member of the Tasmanian Turf Club and currently serves on the TTC Committee. She has made a great contribution through her creative approach to attracting new racegoers to exciting events at the Mowbray track.

Sue was also on the board of the Variety Club of Tasmania.

Sue is the Principal of Sue Rees Modelling & Deportment Academy and has been operating the successful business in Launceston since 1975. The business has now been expanded to Devonport. Sue has organised fashion shows and parades including Fashion Week for countless charitable events. People often ask Sue who has been operating her schools for nearly 50 years, what has kept up her enthusiasm to keep going. Her reply is “to see the students arriving lacking confidence, self-esteem, social skills etc and then to see them at the end of the course, confident.”

In 2018 Sue organised an international pageant here in Launceston and again after Covid with both national and international entrants.

When Sue was asked why she has been working on the two pageants on a voluntary basis her answer to them was she loves Launceston and Tasmania in general, it will not only be great for the economy but for tourism. Sue always had it in the back of her mind that one day she would be organising something big for young ladies following their dreams starting here in her own town, and yes, it is going to happen.

**Thank you Sue for all that you have done and continue to do for young Tasmanians and the promotion of your state.**

## Celebrating 50 Years of the Australian Honours System

### Canberra Museum & Gallery

**Exhibition 31 May – 31 August 2025**

This year we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Australian Honours system, which was established in 1975 to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of Australians in diverse and wide-ranging fields. Awards include the Emergency Services Medal, Australian Sports Medal, Bravery Medal, Distinguished Service Medal, Nursing Service Cross, Order of Australia Medal, and many more.

While some award recipients are household names, the vast majority are unsung heroes. The common characteristics shared by recipients are their selflessness and their tireless commitment to work in their chosen fields, where they have gone above and beyond to achieve positive change and improvements for the community.

The anniversary is a chance to reflect on the extraordinary Australians that have been celebrated in the first five decades and think about the next 50 years of the Australian Honours system. The stories of recipients remind us that care, kindness, and respect are what matter most to all Australians. Collectively, their achievements are the story of who we are and the nation we are becoming.

This exhibition showcases a selection of medals, artworks, photographs and audiovisual footage that tell the story of 50 years of the Australian Honours Awards and highlights the achievements of some of the ACT's Honours Awards recipients.

Canberra Museum and Gallery

<https://www.cmag.com.au/>

Cnr **London Circuit and City Square**, Canberra City

MONDAY—FRIDAY: 10AM—4PM

SATURDAY—SUNDAY (AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS): 12—4PM

A vibrant place in the heart of the city, Canberra Museum and Gallery celebrates the region's social history and visual arts with dynamic exhibitions and unique community programs and events.

Cnr London Circuit and City Square, Canberra City

(02) 6207 3968. Find [Canberra Museum and Gallery](#) on Google Maps



## OAA Merchandise is available to purchase for you and your friends



Pen in gift box **\$7.00**



Socks **\$11.00**



Key ring in gift box  
**\$12.00**

Pack of 5 Cards  
With envelopes  
**\$10.00**



All items and others in the OAA range can be purchased at  
[www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/shopping-cart](http://www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/shopping-cart)



## Receive an e-copy of The Order national magazine

With a focus on the environment and reducing plastic wrap and printing, members are encouraged to opt for an e-copy of the quarterly national magazine.

This approach will reduce the cost of printing, plastic wrap and postage.

If interested, please email the OAA National Membership Officer [aaanatmbrofficer@theorderofaustralia.asn.au](mailto:aaanatmbrofficer@theorderofaustralia.asn.au) asking for the national database to be changed to the e-copy distribution of The Order national magazine.

Thank you in advance for making a difference.

