

The ORDER



THE NATIONAL MAGAZINE OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION

EDITION 79 MAY/JUN 2025

RRP \$10.00 inc. GST





THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION OFFICE HOLDERS

Patron

Her Excellency The Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC,
Governor-General of Australia

National President: The Honourable Vicki O'Halloran AO CVO

Executive Directors

National Chair: MAJGEN Barry Nunn AO RFD ED (Retd)
Mobile: 0408 540 082

Email: natchair@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Deputy National Chair: Mr Willam Lye OAM KC
Mobile: 0412 535 898

Email: depnatchair@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

National Secretary: Mr Graham Hyde OAM
Mobile: 0419 736 571

Email: natsec@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

National Treasurer: Mr Frank Crawley OAM
Mobile: 0402 288 800

Email: nattreasurer@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

National Membership Director: Mrs Kathy Wooldridge OAM
Mobile: 0408 885 527

Email: natmbrdir@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Branch Nominated Directors

ACT: Mr Michael Crane DSC & Bar, AM
Mobile: 0427 719 020

Email: direct@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

NSW: Mr David North OAM

Mobile: 0419 485 071

Email: dirnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

NT: Vacant

Email: dirnt@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

QLD: Ms Paula Penfold AM

Mobile: 0418 984 588

Email: dirqld@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

SA: Noel Hender OAM BEM

Mobile: 0409 672 882

Email: dirsa@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

TAS: Dr Rosemary Callingham AM

Mobile: 0427 445 718

Email: dirtas@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

VIC: Mr Grahame Leonard AM

Mobile: 0411 462 242

Email: dirvic@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

WA: Mr Clive Robartson AM

Mobile: 0419 048 556

Email: dirwa@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

OAA National Office

The Order of Australia Association Limited,
Old Parliament House

18 King George Terrace, Parkes, ACT 2600

Tel: (02) 6273 0322

Overseas Regional Groups

United Kingdom/Europe

Chair: Dr Caroline Hoffman OAM

Tel: +44 79 3902 8378

Email: uk-europe@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

North America

Chair: Mr Gregory Copley AM

Tel: +1 703 9094 167

Email: grcopley@aol.com

THE ORDER

The Order, the national publication of The Order of Australia Association Limited, is published by the National Board of the OAA. It appears also on the Association's website:

www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Editor: Dr June Kane AM

Mobile: 0400 871 731

Publisher for the Board:

June Kane AM

Email: nateditor@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

The Association does not necessarily endorse any third-party advertisement published in The Order or accept any responsibility or liability for those advertisements or the goods and services they advertise.

ISSN 1835-4378 (print)

ISSN 1835-4386 (online)

Print post approved. RRP \$10.00 inc GST.

Free to OAA members.

Cover photo: SYD25, the OAA National Conference, comes to an end on the flight deck of HMAS Adelaide, moored in Sydney Harbour. Photo credit: Carlos Velasco, Photographer

FROM HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE SAM MOSTYN AC

GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA



It has been a very busy time for us all since I last wrote. You came together for your national conference in Sydney earlier this month, which I hear was a wonderful gathering of members: like the Order itself, diverse and united by a common belief in the potential of every Australian to make a difference.

At the same time, the newest members of the Order have been invested in Canberra and Government Houses across Australia, 50 years after the first awards in 1975, the year the Order of Australia was established. As I shared with our honourees in Canberra, some of those first awards were for acts of bravery and dedication in Cyclone Tracy, which had devastated Darwin just a few months before. Our honours and awards have continued to be a recognition of individual care, kindness, respect and achievement, as well as a record of our national story. A story that often involves responding and rebuilding in the wake of disaster but also imagining a better future for our people and our place. A story that includes people who serve, in defence and civilian roles, to keep us safe and to care for our social fabric.

Most recently, I had the privilege of representing Australia on an official visit to Türkiye, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, with an unexpected visit to Rome for the funeral of Pope Francis. In Ankara, I had the honour of presenting the Australian Police Medal to AFP Detective Superintendent and Senior Officer to Türkiye, Marie Andersson. Over more than 20 years, Marie's distinguished service has spanned regions, deepened collaboration and trust with international partners, supported local authorities and improved lives. It was very meaningful to spend time with her, and

particularly to present her well-deserved medal. She represented so much of what we celebrate in the Awards.

I was in Türkiye to commemorate Anzac Day at Gallipoli, which was a profoundly moving ceremony, where I also met so many fellow Australians – many who had made the pilgrimage to Gallipoli for the dawn service, and many others who worked in our embassies and consulates across the region. It was affirming to see how they represent our modern, multicultural nation, and embody our Australian character of integrity, respect, service, kindness and care.

Having just spent time with Australians making us proud so far from home, it was especially encouraging to return to Australia and prepare immediately for the autumn investitures. Over multiple ceremonies, and among the 50th Anniversary exhibition curated by the Government House team, it was inspiring to meet yet another group of remarkable Australians. They were diverse, dedicated, deeply humble, and thoroughly deserving of the awards I was privileged to bestow on them. We have taken the opportunity to tell many more of the stories of those receiving awards using our social media platforms, to give a behind-the-scenes sense of the events and more information on how our honours and awards system works. I have seen similar communications across the country from the state governors. It says so much about how we can share stories and inspire nominations 50 years after their creation.

Performing these ceremonies remains among the most rewarding and uplifting parts of my role. I look forward to seeing more of the outstanding recipients, past and present, throughout this anniversary year.

FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION

HON VICKI O'HALLORAN AO CVO



President Vicki with Foundation Chair Dr Helen Nugent AO at the Scholarships presentation.
Photo credit: Carlos Velasco Photographer.

At the core of our work at The Order of Australia Association is the belief that recognition fosters a sense of belonging and encourages positive change in our communities. There are so many Australians that embody the values of selflessness, service and sacrifice. Their stories really do inspire us all to do more.

The 2025 Sydney Conference was a key opportunity to connect with inspirational individuals, reflect on past achievements, celebrate current contributions, and look forward with optimism. Together, let us continue to build a nation that recognizes the importance of each individual and supports those who work tirelessly; whether through volunteerism or innovation, these individuals embody The Order and contribute to a brighter tomorrow for all.

With any national conference we are creating memories, and this very well-organised conference offered many opportunities to do this. None more significant than presentation of the Order of Australia Foundation Scholarships that are designed to support talented individuals who show outstanding potential in their fields of study and their commitment to making a positive impact on society. These scholarships not only provide financial support but also serve as a platform to nurture the next generation of leaders, innovators and changemakers. By investing in the future of young Australians, the Foundation continues the legacy of those who have gone before us - recognizing the

importance of both individual achievement and the collective good.

Thank you to all Foundation Scholarship sponsors. Your generosity plays a critical role in empowering young people to pursue their passions, whether it be in the arts, science, community service or any number of disciplines. In doing so, we not only provide them with the tools to succeed but also encourage them to use their talents to create lasting change.

At the conclusion of the conference, I travelled to our capital city to attend the autumn investitures at Government House in Canberra. It is a privilege to witness the recognition of outstanding Australians by our dedicated Patron, the Governor-General of Australia, Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn AC. I extend my warm and heartfelt thanks to Her Excellency and the team at Government House for their kind and welcoming hospitality, as always.

Go well everyone.

AFTER YOU OPEN THE BOX

It is a great feeling to walk away from your investiture with that beautifully presented certificate and the box that holds the insignia that let the world know that your country has honoured your service. But then the panic sets in... which piece of insignia do you wear and when?

Insignia of the Order of Australia can be worn in various situations, but generally:

The full-size insignia is worn at day functions (such as Anzac Day, Remembrance Day services or special services like State Funerals).

The miniature version is worn at evening events where decorations are prescribed. The exception to this is neck decorations (AC and AO), which are worn in full-size.

The lapel badge can be worn on civilian clothes at any time, but only one badge should be worn at a time* and not when other insignia pieces are worn.

Australian Order of Wearing

If you have received other honours and awards, then the *Order of Wearing* of Australian honours and awards will advise on the placement of all awards in the Australian honours system. This can be found at: www.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/resource/download/wearing-awards-order-of-wearing.pdf.

Important Considerations

- **Uniformed Services:** Members of uniformed services should wear their Order of Australia insignia in accordance with their service's dress regulations.
- **Multiple Insignia:** When a person holds more than one award, the main insignia are mounted on a medal bar in the order set out in the *Australian Order of Wearing*.
- Most Australian awards are pinned above the left breast.
- If the main insignia is in the form of a neck badge, it is worn around the neck accordingly.

Awards made to next-of-kin

In recent years, it has become common for people to wear the awards of deceased family members when marching in their place at commemorative events such as Anzac Day and Remembrance Day. The RSL encourages people to wear their forebears' medals on the **right** breast, which indicates the awards are not their own.

What happens if I lose a piece of my insignia?

If you lose or damage your insignia, or if you would like extra copies of the lapel

badge so that you do not have to transfer it from jacket to jacket, please contact:

Honours Secretariat

The Order of Australia
Government House
Yarralumla ACT 2600
Telephone: (02) 6283 3533
Email: honours@gg.gov.au

You **cannot** order replacements from the Association merchandise service. The pin available in the OAA shop is an Association pin, not part of your insignia.

* Many members, for example, have lapel badges for Rotary awards or membership of other Orders, but these should not be worn alongside the Order of Australia badge; some members choose to wear them on the right lapel instead.





FROM THE OAA NATIONAL CHAIR

MAJGEN BARRY NUNN AO RFD ED (Retd)



We are fortunate to be members of a community where we can have a national election, with all of us having a say, have heated but rational debate at all levels, and get on with life afterwards without rancor or civil unrest. We can be proud to be Australians.

The 2025 National Conference in Sydney was a great success and a credit to the NSW Branch hosts. A televised address by the Governor-General Her Excellency the Hon. Ms Sam Mostyn AC was followed by a challenging annual Oration, presented by General the Hon. Sir Peter Cosgrove AK AC CVO MC. This was well received, as was the impressive band of speakers that followed. The annual dinner saw the presentation by the Governor of NSW Her Excellency the Hon. Margaret Beazley AC KC of five tertiary scholarships. The conference was brought to a 'grand finale', hosted by the Royal Australian Navy aboard HMAS Adelaide. The overall impression was that feedback to those unable to attend would be "you should have been there!"

We completed our Annual General Meeting during the Sydney conference. The review of 2024 highlighted increased activity throughout the Association, underpinned by sound financial performance. The accompanying

Members' Forum was well attended and covered a wide range of matters of interest to members and to those formulating our future strategies. You can read more about the AGM and the Forum on pages 6 and 7 of this issue.

We now face the challenge of attracting more holders of Order of Australia awards to join us. We can all play a part in welcoming new award recipients at Branch and regional functions, and in continuing to offer opportunities for involvement in the life of the Association. We need also to ensure that we retain members by offering new and innovative opportunities both for fellowship and engagement with the community. We plan to gather members' ideas on this during the year.

2025 to date is proving to be an encouraging year, with continuing activities throughout the Association and much work in progress for the 2026 National Conference in Brisbane.

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST: VACANCY - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON THE NATIONAL BOARD

Members are invited to consider nominating for the position of National Membership Director on the National Board. The appointment will be for a three-year term.

A member of the Association is any member who is currently financial, in accordance with the Constitution (Clause 13.1). The nomination form is to be completed by two members and the nominee.

Nominees are requested to provide a resume of no more than 400 words noting their skills and experience relevant to the responsibilities of the position.

Nominations are to be lodged with the Chair of the Nominations Committee on or before 5pm (AEST) 27 June 2025 as follows:

Mr David North OAM
Chair Nominations Committee
The Order of Australia Association Ltd
18 Bushland Ave, Mt Pleasant, NSW 2579
Email: dirnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au
Mobile: 0419 485 071

Note

The Board Charter includes a Position Description and Application Form for Executive Director positions and is available from the National Secretary at: natsec@theorderofaustralia.asn.au. Mobile: 0419 736 571

Intending nominees are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the statutory and legal requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC) and the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC): <https://www.acnc.gov.au/for-charities/manage-your-charity/governance-hub/governance-standards>

Graham Hyde OAM
National Secretary
21 May 2025



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND MEMBERS FORUM HELD ON SATURDAY 3 MAY 2025

The National Secretary advised that there was a quorum. The National President, Hon. Vicki O'Halloran AO CVO, welcomed 130 members and 25 guests to the meeting. The National Secretary advised that there were 46 apologies and 34 proxies received. The National Chair, MAJGEN Barry Nunn AO RFD ED (Retd), presented the Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2024, highlighting the following:

- The Association's Patron, His Excellency General the Hon. David Hurley AC CVO DSC (Retd) retired as Governor-General in 2024; the incoming Governor-General, Her Excellency the Hon. Ms Sam Mostyn AC, accepted patronage of the Association.
- A successful 2024 national conference was held in Perth in May with 192 delegates attending. All OAA Branches were represented. Conference funding was enhanced by several generous donations in cash and kind. A challenging and informative annual oration was presented by the Hon. Malcolm McCusker AC CVO KC. The annual dinner attracted 237 members and guests, with the guest of honour, the Governor of WA, His Excellency the Hon. Chris Dawson AC APM, presenting six OAA Foundation scholarships.
- Planning for the 2025 national conference in Sydney was completed with registrations well underway by year end. The 2026 national conference was relocated to Brisbane, with NT branch hosting deferred.
- Membership fees were reduced for 2024 and lifetime membership replaced with a 25-year option.

A reduction in the number of awards in the General Division (1,232 in 2024 compared to 1,655 in 2023) reduced potential membership. Approximately 41% of new awardees in 2024 joined. OAA membership at year end was 8,080, an increase of just 11, comprising 521 new members, 229 members deceased and 343 members not renewing.

- Financial performance was strong despite the 10% reduction in membership fees, with significant investment growth and dividend flows. The value of invested funds at year end was \$2,088,741, a 6.9% increase through the year.
- All Branches were active in 2024. A new Regional Group was established in SA and the potential for an additional one in NSW identified. Procedures were established for confidential electronic/postal voting and conducted successfully in one Branch. National funding of Branches based on budgeted activity rather than membership was introduced.
- The National Board met nine times on-line, and face-to-face with Branch chairmen in May and on-line in September. National Deputy Chair John Archer OAM was succeeded in the role by William Lye OAM KC. Graham Hyde OAM was reappointed as National Secretary and Alan Morrison AM retired as a director, succeeded by Andrew Phelan AM.
- Several new policies and procedures were adopted, existing ones updated and the Risk Management Framework, Business Continuity Plan and a Communication Plan reviewed.

- Marketing activity included planning and implementation of an OAA social media presence, a review of merchandise marketing and the inclusion of advertising in *The Order* magazine.

The **Annual Financial Report** was presented by the National Treasurer.

Highlights of the 2024 year included:

- Membership fees were reduced by an average of 10%
- Trading income increased by 11% including Branch, Regional Group and investment income
- There was a surplus of \$92,747 before investments value increase
- The average income per member was \$109.93 and the average expense per member was \$98.45
- National investment income increased by 98.6%
- Administrative grants to Branches totalled \$49,504
- Members equity (assets-less-liabilities) increased by 19.2%
- *The Order* magazine costs were \$76,368, an increase of 20%
- There were 521 new members and 62 who rejoined but regrettably 572 were lost through resignation or death, resulting in a net loss of 50 members.
- The Board set aside \$90,000 for two Foundation Scholarships to be awarded at a time to be decided by the Board.

All business requiring member approval was passed unanimously.



(Top line L-R): Oration by Sir Peter Cosgrove AK CVO MC (Retd); Innovator Extraordinaire Dr Jordan Nguyen; Chef Matt Moran AM in conversation with Sophie Scott OAM. (Bottom line L-R): Soprano Clarissa Spata and Tenor Gaetano Bonfante enthral delegates; NSW Governor Hon. Margaret Beazley AC KC addresses the Gala Dinner; wreaths laid at HMAS Parramatta/Bow Memorial. Photos: Carlos Velasco.



The National Chair welcomed 70 members to the **Annual Members' Forum** and reminded them that this was their meeting and a time to raise any issues of concern or suggestions for improvements. Here is a summary of Questions raised and Answers provided:

Q. Why is the time taken by the Honours Secretariat between an award nomination and the approval of the award so long?

A. Nominations have increased significantly and neither staff nor office systems meet current requirements. The Governor-General has processes in place to address this issue. A suggestion was made by an attending member that members could volunteer to assist. It was noted that, although this is a nice offer, it is not practical because of the possibility of conflict of interest.

Q. What can be done to address the lack of media coverage following each Australia Day and Kings Birthday awards announcement?

A. All members need to aim to raise the awareness of the Order within their community and with media contacts before the announcement.

Q. How many Indigenous Australians have been awarded a Foundation Scholarship?

A. Three out of 60 to date. Three have been set aside for the NT Conference.

Comment. The cost of functions sometimes inhibits members from attending.

A. All Branches have the same issue but are encouraged to consider what might be done. Members will be surveyed in 2024 and will have the opportunity to provide ideas to address the question. Several members advised how their Branch manages functions at a reasonable cost.

Q. What is being done to improve the conversion rate to membership of recipients?

A. Branches and members need to make prospective members feel welcome and promote the benefits of membership. Comments by attending members included: using emails, ongoing personal invitations to events, having a differential function rate for members and non-members.

Q. *The Order* is costly to produce; why don't we only issue an electronic copy?

A. We do. However some 41% of members prefer a hard copy and 5% of members do not have an email address.

Q. Will our medals be replaced to show the King's crown?

A. No. The crown on Australian insignia is not the late Queen's crown but the crown of Saint Edward, which is the crown used to crown the monarch.

Q. Why are so many functions held in metropolitan areas, not regional areas?

A. This a Branch matter to address. Some regional members spoke about how they conduct activities in their regions.

Q. The number of people nominated from a diverse or ethnic background does not seem to be very high. How can this be improved?

A. Comments from attending members indicated that this is a complex issue involving language, suspicion of government by some ethnic groups, and lack of links to ethnic organisations (one Branch has established a multicultural officer position). Attendees agreed that all members have a role to play in promoting multicultural nominations.

Q. Why are Gold Medal Olympians given an OAM? We have an Australian Sports Medal. Surely this is more appropriate?

A. We have been advised that the Governor-General has received letters from community members expressing similar sentiments about a range of

issues and she is proposing a review of the Australian honours and awards system during 2025.

Comment. One member congratulated the Board and Branches on what they do and the involvement of members at all levels of the Association. She noted the use of social media and would like to help in any way possible. She suggested that an officer be appointed in each Branch to manage social media. The younger demographic uses social media extensively and, used appropriately, it will benefit the Association.

A. A process has been started and discussions were held the previous day between the Board and Branch Chairs on improved action on social media.

Comment. The Foundation provides scholarships for tertiary students and some states provide a wide range of student citizenship awards, but there is no national system in place to implement an ongoing secondary school student mentorship programme.

A. The National Office does not conduct such programmes. This is seen as the role of the Foundation and the various Branches. The Board will review the suggestion to determine whether it is financially and practically possible.

Q. Why do we not see many AC and AO members attending the conference?

A. There are not many of them (847 or 10% of our membership), and there are four AOs at this conference. A high proportion of attendees are OAMs.

In closing, the National Chair thanked members for attending and providing questions and comments that will further assist the Association in meeting its purpose.

Graham Hyde OAM
National Secretary



(L-R): Farewell and handover to Queensland Branch aboard HMAS Adelaide



THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION MERCHANDISE



Cufflinks **\$35.00**



Tie **\$30.00**



Cap **\$21.00**



Cooler Bag
\$20.00



Document Bag
\$37.00



Pen in gift box **\$7.00**



Socks
\$11.00



Umbrella
\$30.00



Key ring in gift box
\$12.00



Lapel pin **\$15.00**

Grey
Knit scarf
\$25.00



Pack of 5 Cards
\$10.00

Blue
Knit scarf
\$26.00



Silver
Silk scarf
\$45.00



Blue
Silk scarf
\$52.00



New longer length



Beanie **\$18.00**



Bucket hat **\$16.00**



Bag
Holder
\$10.00

Apron
\$30.00



Enquiries Barb 0413 008 571

All items in the OAA range can be purchased at
www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/shopping-cart





CHAIR'S REPORT

Dr John Gullotta AM

Branch Chair

chairnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

As convenor, I am extremely happy and proud that SYD25, our National Conference in Sydney, was a huge success, very well attended with record numbers and thoroughly enjoyed by all present. I would like to thank the organising committee for their hard work and personal support to enable my vision for SYD25 to come to fruition. In the

words of our National Chair, MAJGEN Barry Nunn AO RFD ED (Retd), "It was truly magnificent!"

The excellent line up of speakers was of the highest calibre and certainly captured the charisma of our conference theme of Celebrate | Motivate | Nominate, "Inspiring Australian Achievers!" Our thanks to all the volunteers for their hard work and to our sponsors for their kindness, generosity and support of our Association enabling us to deliver very special "once in a lifetime" experiences for our delegates. I would especially like to acknowledge and thank our Platinum sponsor ABAL Banking, Gold sponsors LSH Auto and HSBC, Bronze sponsors Stanmore Mazda and De Lorenzo Haircare as well as all the other sponsors listed in the conference report (see pages 11-12 of this issue).

A very special thank you to our Patron and NSW Governor, Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC and Government House Sydney for hosting our Welcome Reception and to Rear Admiral Christopher Smith AM CSM RAN, Commander of the Australian Fleet, Royal Australian Navy, for hosting us aboard HMAS Adelaide for our handover lunch and also for the remembrance service and wreath laying at HMAS Parramatta/Bow Memorial at North Garden Island. It was certainly a very moving and special service to remember all fallen and current Order of Australia award recipients who have served or are currently serving in our armed forces.

Our appreciation to Shentel Lee and Bowerhaus for producing and donating the unique 50 year commemorative pins, Gaetano Bonfante and Clarissa Spata for the musical performance which blew the audience away, and to Studio Deluca 1937 and Caffé Etna for the delicious cannoli, granita and birthday cake! It made the 50th celebrations unforgettable and very special. Thank you to AChaired Sound for the pre-Gala Dinner entertainment and to Maybelle and Mark for entertaining us for the evening.

My thanks to Margaret and Matt Eagers from MERS Events for all their help in the organisation of the conference and to make sure it ran like a well-oiled machine and of course to Carlos Velasco for his excellent photography and for capturing the highlights of the conference in his signature friendly and precise style.

We now pass the baton to Ronda Nix OAM and her committee and look forward to a successful national conference in Brisbane in 2026.

The NSW Branch held its AGM on 11 March 2025 at the Castlereagh Boutique Hotel. My thanks to outgoing committee member Harold Sharp OAM and welcome to our newly elected committee member David Stuart-Watt AM. I congratulate the newly formed NSW Branch Committee and I am very excited to be working productively with such a dynamic and enthusiastic committee.

Post-SYD25, our NSW Branch work continues, including arranging meetings in our major regional hubs and arranging no-cost member forums to enable events to be affordable and accessible to all our members. The 2025 King's Birthday Investitures are held at the end of May and we look forward to attending the Investiture ceremonies at Government House Sydney to represent and promote our Association. We will also hold the annual luncheon for the KB25 New Recipients and their guests at NSW Parliament House in June.

On 22 July 2025 the NSW Branch will celebrate 45 years and we will arrange a special celebration to commemorate this milestone.

I look forward to seeing you all at our upcoming events.

NSW BRANCH

OFFICE HOLDERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Patron

Her Excellency The Honourable
Margaret Beazley AC KC

Chair

Dr John Gullotta AM
Mobile: 0418 233 069
Email: chairnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Deputy Chair

Ms Martha Jabour OAM
Mobile: 0417 442 287

Honorary Secretary

Mrs Dianne North OAM
Mobile: 0429 774 363
Email: dianne_north@bigpond.com

Honorary Treasurer

Mrs Louise Paisley OAM
Mobile: 0414 597 323

Branch Nominated Director and Regional Coordinator

Mr David North OAM
Mobile: 0419 485 071
Email: dirnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Branch Membership Officer

Dr Geoffrey Glasscock AM

Youth Community Service Award Coordinator

Dr Frank Kelleher OAM

Committee Members

Mr Romano Di Donato OAM
Adj. Prof Sophie Scott OAM
Mr Gary Smith AM
Mrs Trish Wetton OAM
David Stuart-Watt AM

The Order of Australia Association NSW Branch Postal Address

PO Box 561
Parramatta NSW 2124

Check out our website
www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au

EVENTS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) AND LUNCHEON, 11 MARCH 2025

The 2025 AGM was attended by more than 40 members and guests. NSW Branch Chair, Dr John Gullotta AM, officially welcomed all members and guests and declared the meeting open and outlined his report for the previous year. The Hon. Secretary Dianne North OAM delivered her report followed by the Treasurer's report by Louise Paisley OAM who summarised the Branch's financial status, which is in an excellent state. Dr Frank Kelleher OAM gave a vote of thanks and presented a gift to Lynette Smith OAM who has been a judge for our Youth Community Service Awards since 2015.

A full list of committee members for 2025 is listed in the caption to the NSW Branch Committee photo to the NSW Branch Committee photo below.

After the AGM the luncheon included a presentation by guest speaker Janelle Craig from the Rotary Club of West Pennant Hills-Cherrybrook. Janelle is the District Chair for the Respectful Relationships Programme being run by Rotary District 9685. This involves raising awareness of domestic and family violence and promoting respectful relationships. This project provides 20 Safe Hand Bursaries worth \$500 each to school-aged children to keep them engaged with school. The funds can be used for such things as education resources, school excursions and after-school activities. The NSW Branch donated two Bursaries totalling \$1,000 to this worthy cause.



(L-R): Dr John Gullotta AM, Lynette Smith OAM, Frank Kelleher OAM



Guest speaker Janelle Craig



(L-R): David North OAM, Branch Nominated Director; Romano Di Donato OAM, Committee Member; Martha Jabour OAM, Deputy Chair; John Gullotta AM, Chair; David Stuart-Watt AM, Committee Member; Dianne North OAM, Hon. Secretary; Louise Paisley OAM, Treasurer; Trish Wetton OAM, Committee Member; Geoffrey Glasscock AM, Membership Officer; Frank Kelleher OAM, Youth Community Services Award

SYD25:

“ A TRULY MAGNIFICENT CONFERENCE! ”

After two years of planning for SYD25, there was a massive buzz in the air starting from the Wednesday afternoon when the conference committee packed the welcome satchels and put the programmes together in readiness for the conference. Suddenly it hit us that the time had come and this was promising to be something big!

On Thursday afternoon, the Registration Desk was busy welcoming conference delegates, presenting their satchels and providing information. There was certainly an air of excitement and anticipation with a happy band of “orange sash” volunteers helping Margaret and Matt from MERS Events. The satchels wowed people with an Australia Post 50th Anniversary First Day Cover, a special 50th anniversary lapel pin made and donated by Bowerhaus, chocolates recalling the invitation given at last year’s Perth Conference, along with many other goodies.

That night, delegates were transported to Government House Sydney for the Welcome Reception hosted by NSW Governor, Her Excellency the Hon. Margaret Beazley AC KC. The Army Band provided music while we enjoyed our canapés and drinks.

It was truly a wonderful and special start to the conference in the beautiful surrounds of Government House Sydney.

Friday’s activities began with a welcome from Conference Convenor and NSW Chair Dr John Gullotta AM.



NSW Chair Dr John Gullotta launches SYD25

Uncle Lloyd Walker then gave the Welcome to Country. Lloyd is a former Australian Rugby Union player and gave us stories of his life and experiences growing up in the La Perouse mission.

The National Anthem was beautifully sung by Opera Australia star soprano Clarissa Spata.

The Governor General Her Excellency the Hon. Sam Mostyn AC, and the NSW Governor were unable to be present, but sent their heartfelt videos of welcome.

The President of the Association, The Hon. Vicki O’Halloran AO CVO then officially opened the 37th National Conference, SYD25.

General The Hon. Sir Peter Cosgrove AK AC (Mil) CVO MC (Retd) delivered the oration with style and grace. He gave a very insightful perspective about The Order of Australia award system encapsulating our theme of CELEBRATE | MOTIVATE | NOMINATE - Inspiring Australian Achievers!.



Dr Jordan Nguyen talks to his friendly robot KOOBO

The brilliant line up of guest speakers was headed by Dr Jordan Nguyen, assisted by his immensely proud father Prof Hung Nguyen AM. Jordan spoke about his life, inspirations and future technology. His demonstration of his companion robot “Koobo” was absolutely amazing! His invention of a wheelchair controlled by the mind and a video of a mobility-challenged young man driving a car by simply using eye movements were eye-opening!

Following this was a Crime Time panel. Simon Bouda AM was the storyteller, Deborah Wallace APM was the Gang Buster and Martha Jabour OAM was the Heart Mender.



Phil Carey interviews Simon Bouda AM, Martha Jabour OAM and Deborah Wallace APM

Prof Kelvin Kong AM then spoke about his life as the first Indigenous Surgeon. He spoke passionately about the art of advocacy.

Ronda Nix OAM, Chair of the Brisbane Conference Committee, treated us to an inviting promotion of the 2026 National Conference to be held in the wonderful city of Brisbane.

There were more speakers after lunch: Sue-Ellen Lovett OAM spoke of her paralympic equestrian experiences and fundraising long distance horse rides encouraging everyone to ‘Dare to Dream’; John Brogden AM, former politician and Chair of Lifeline, gave

continued next page

a great presentation on 'Profiles in Hope' and battling the black dog of depression with positive messages of resilience; and Adj. Prof Sophie Scott OAM led an in-depth conversation with world renowned chef Matt Moran AM, where we learned about his life and his introduction to cooking as well as his future projects.

After afternoon tea, Sophie Scott, wellness expert, spoke about how we can change our habits, positivity and wellness, Giles Gunsekera OAM spoke about the power of representation, Brett Murray OAM, founder of the Make Bullying History Foundation, about bullying and Molly Croft, an amazing young woman, founder of the Tye Dye Project, spoke about her life experiences about finding light in life's storms. There was not a dry eye in the room!

Following a full day of inspiring speakers, all the delegates were on a feel-good high and left with a great sense of positivity and inspiration ready to celebrate, motivate and nominate other worthy recipients.

The conference then turned to an Italian celebratory theme with the serving of granita and cannoli by Studio De Luca 1937, while the ballroom was being set up for a preview of the Brightman-Bocelli musical show. This turned out to be the highlight of the day as tenor Gaetano Bonfante and soprano Clarissa Spata, both stars from Opera Australia, entertained us with excerpts from their show, while we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Order of Australia awards with champagne to the sounds of 'Brindisi' from La Traviata and millefoglie birthday cake by Caff  Etna. A wonderful end to the day.



Italian delicacies

Saturday began with the OAA AGM and the Members' Forum where many interesting issues were raised.

In the afternoon there was a special choral evensong at the historic St James' Church to celebrate 50 years of the Order. The church has recently installed a new organ that they were proud to show us along with the choir singing hymns written by Australian composers. We were hosted and made very welcome by Rev Christopher Waterhouse, Rector of St James. Refreshments followed in the enclosed courtyard.

In the evening renowned choir, AChaired Sound entertained everyone at the pre-Gala Dinner drinks. The Gala Dinner MC was television news and radio presenter Ron Wilson. During the evening, five brilliant young university students received OAA Foundation Scholarships worth \$40,000 each so they can continue with their studies. Our guests of honour were NSW Governor, Her Excellency the Hon. Margaret Beazley AC KC and Mr Dennis Wilson. The evening was a great success with more than 330 people attending. Singer Maybelle with guitarist Mark provided the evening's entertainment.



Dignitaries at the gala dinner

On Sunday morning, buses took us to the Garden Island Naval Base for a wreath-laying ceremony at the HMAS Parramatta/Bow memorial. Afterwards we took a short walk to HMAS Adelaide, where Rear Admiral Christopher Smith AM CSM, RAN, Commander of the Australian Fleet, welcomed us aboard for our farewell lunch. The Navy Band entertained us with their jazzy upbeat tunes. The conference baton was passed to the 2026 Brisbane Conference organising committee with the ceremonial handing over of the "orange sashes" worn by NSW volunteers by the NSW Conference Committee. In his closing, National Chair MAJGEN Barry Nunn AO called it "a truly magnificent conference!"



All Aboard! For lunch!

After lunch, we were all asked to take the lift to the flight deck. This was no ordinary lift. It took 50 people at a time. It is usually used to move aircraft and heavy vehicles, so this was a great experience for everyone.

Our friendly photographer, Carlos Velasco, painstakingly moved people around so that he could take a group photo with a view of Sydney in the background. The photo showed our group in the shape of Australia with the Opera House and Harbour Bridge as backdrop. What an iconic photo!

After bidding farewell to all our old and new friends made over the duration of the conference and promising to meet up again in Brisbane next year, we returned to the Sofitel Wentworth Hotel and went our separate ways.

The organisers wish to thank all delegates for attending and for sending positive feedback for the conference and for their many messages of congratulation.



CHAIR'S REPORT

Ronda Nix OAM

Branch Chair

chairqld@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

On 29 of April, we welcomed our 2025 Australia Day awardees at a dinner for recipients and their family members and guests. Currently, we are looking forward to celebrating the 50th Anniversary of The Order of Australia and the King's Birthday and with a Black-Tie

Dinner on 14 June in the presence of the Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency the Hon. Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM.

At our AGM we welcomed two new committee members: Kate Copeland AM, who replaced our long-serving Sunshine Coast Convenor and Protocol Officer Marjorie Voss OAM; and Jenny Gregory OAM, who replaced Peter McMurtrie AO KStJ our Governance/Policy Review Officer.

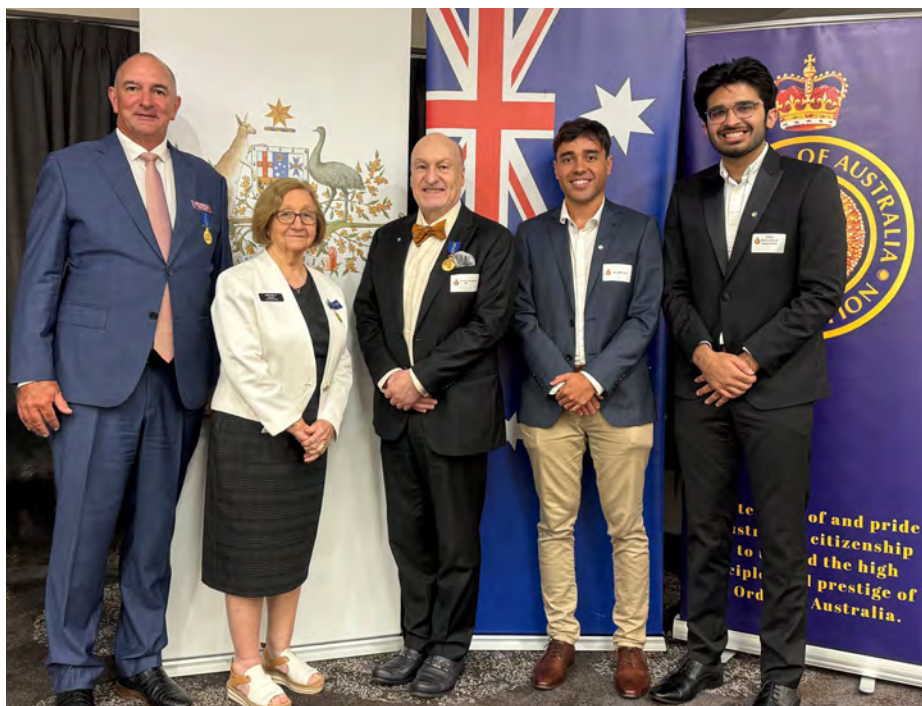
A large cohort of Queensland Branch committee members along with a number of other members of the Queensland Branch travelled to Sydney to enjoy the recent national conference, New South Wales-style. Congratulations to NSW Chair Dr John Gullotta AM and his team on a most memorable event. Now it is up to our Branch to deliver a great conference in Brisbane next year, Queensland-style. We are looking forward to the challenge. The theme of our BRIZ26 Conference is *A Bridge to the Future*.

EVENTS

AROUND THE REGIONS

The Central Queensland Region lunch on 5 February in Rockhampton was attended by 55 members and guests including Queensland Branch Chair, Ronda Nix OAM.

The guest speaker was Professor Alan Sandford AM, a Specialist Medical Administrator, Director, Regional Medical Pathway in Central Queensland and Wide Bay Hospital and Health Services, a past President of the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators (RACMA) and an Honorary Professor at the University of Queensland, Central Queensland University and James Cook University.



(L-R): OAA CQ Regional Convenor Grant Cassidy OAM, OAA Queensland Chair Ronda Nix OAM, Professor Sandford AM, medical students Jay Warcon and Muhammad Abdul Hadi ("Hadi")

QUEENSLAND BRANCH

OFFICE HOLDERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Patron

Her Excellency the Hon. Dr Jeanette Young AC PSM Governor of Queensland

Chair

Ronda Nix OAM
Mobile: 0409 615 514

Deputy Chair

Dr Mick Davis AM ASM
Mobile: 0429 462 764

Membership Officer/Secretary

Robyn Porter OAM
Mobile: 0407 223 600

Treasurer

Dr Dennis Young AM
Mobile: 0411 631 3444

National Board Director

Paula Penfold AM
Mobile: 0418 984 588

Committee Members

Graham Hyde OAM
Qld Branch Editor - *The Order*

Regional Groups Coordinator

Darryl Secombe OAM

Awards & Metro Events Coordinator

Geoffrey Cowles OAM

Merchandise Officer

Kelvin Brown OAM

Multicultural & Diversity Officer

Irene Cayas OAM

Other Members

Kate Copeland AM
Jenny Gregory OAM

All correspondence to:

Robyn Porter, Secretary
secqld@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Regional Group Convenors

Central Queensland:

Grant Cassidy OAM

Darling Downs:

Rhonda Watson AM

Far North Queensland:

John Hardy OAM

Gold Coast:

Sandra Doumany OAM

Mackay, Isaac, Whitsunday:

Carmel Daveson AM

Sunshine Coast:

Vacant

Townsville:

David Jackson OAM

Wide-Bay Burnett:

Judy Peters OAM



Professor Sandford outlined the Regional Medical Pathways programme he has designed and led over the last four years. It provides a multi-entry programme for regional students to obtain their base medical doctor and specialist qualifications locally through the University of Queensland, CQ University and supported by the Central Queensland and Wide Bay hospital systems. He was joined by two of the programme's inaugural cohort, Muhammad Abdul Hadi ('Hadi') and Jay Warcon, who shared their journey and aspirations for their future medical careers in regional Queensland.

Such an approach not only has better medical outcomes through embedded local cultures, social structures including family, sport, music and logistics, it will improve retention rates in an area experiencing substantial ongoing long-term practitioner shortages.

Both Hadi and Jay emphasised the importance of these contextual issues in their decision making and aspirations in their presentations and during a Q & A with attendees.

At the conclusion of the lunch, Hon. Professor Wallace Taylor OAM was presented with a commemorative plaque from the Queensland Branch by Ronda Nix OAM to recognise his five years' service as the previous Central Queensland Regional Convenor.



Hon. Professor Dr. Wallace Taylor OAM and OAA Queensland Chair Ronda Nix OAM



Linsey Pollak OAM makes music in weird and wonderful ways

ON THE SUNSHINE COAST, 27 FEBRUARY

The first function this year at the Alex Surf Club was a resounding success with 76 members, family and friends joining in a wonderful day.

Linsey Pollak OAM displayed his unique musical talents, and there was tremendous positive feedback from his performance. No one will ever look at simple everyday items the same way again.

Professor Lorraine Mazerolle AC was extremely interesting and her insight into policing and crime issues was very informative and certainly gave us all an insight into crime deterrence going forward. Q & A time could have gone on for hours.

We welcomed our most recent recipient, Mr Gregory Clareburt OAM, recognised in the Australia Day Honours 2025 *for service to the community of the Noosa region*.

Also attending their first function were Ms Jocelyn Walker AM, appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in the King's Birthday Honours 2024 *for significant service to business, and to the community through philanthropic endeavours*; Ms Shauna Hicks OAM honoured in the King's Birthday 2024 Honours *for service to community history*; Mr Bob Finch AM, appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in the Australia Day Honours 2019 *for significant service to squash through a range of administrative roles, and as a player*.

DARLING DOWNS MORNING TEA

On 11 April, the Darling Downs Group gathered for a delightful morning tea marked by friendship, reflection and inspiration. The event provided an opportunity for members to reconnect and also to hear a deeply moving address from Guest Speaker David Illife.

David has spent the last 36 years of his life behind a microphone (24 of them with the ABC), helping people share stories as a radio presenter, journalist, videographer and speaker.

David shared the remarkable story of his father's daring escape following the fall of Singapore during World War II. With vivid detail, he recounted the hardships and bravery involved in eluding capture by the Japanese forces, offering a poignant reminder of the resilience and sacrifice of those who served.

In a heartfelt second part of his talk, David spoke of his family's experiences with autism, sharing that both of his sons are autistic. He reflected on the challenges and joys this has brought to their lives, bringing a personal and emotional depth to the morning's proceedings. His honesty and courage in discussing such personal matters resonated deeply with all in attendance.



(L-R): Ronda Nix OAM, David Illife, Rhonda Watson AM

FEATURED RECIPIENTS

SHINING EXAMPLES OF 'TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY' AT THE AWARD RECIPIENTS' DINNER

On Tuesday 29 April, the Queensland Branch hosted a Welcome Celebratory Dinner in Brisbane to welcome 18 of this year's Australia Day Award recipients. One hundred and fifty-five guests attended including 31 OAAQ members.

All 18 award recipients introduced during the evening were highly deserving of their awards, being recognised for their wonderful achievements to their communities and their outstanding support and encouragement to others.

This article focuses on five of these award recipients for their fine examples of tackling adversity head on and their passion, commitment and strong desire to want to turn negatives into very strong positives.



Melissa McGuinness OAM

MELISSA MCGUINNESS OAM from the Gold Coast received her award *for service to the community, particularly youth*.

A road crash which took four innocent lives, including her son's, prompted Melissa to draw on her tragic experience by founding YOU CHOOSE Youth Road Safety, an organisation that changes driving behaviours and prevents youth road trauma.

Through YOU CHOOSE, Melissa has become a road trauma and harm prevention advocate and presenter sharing her grief, guilt and lessons from her son's passing. In this way she believes her efforts are worthwhile if at least one life is saved.

The YOU CHOOSE programme takes an innovative, shared social-project approach to wellbeing and pastoral care for teens, which focuses on peer advocacy skills as integral to changing behaviours and attitudes.



Wendy Paterson OAM

WENDY PATERSON OAM from The City of Moreton Bay has been recognised *for services to community health*.

Wendy is a breast cancer survivor who, having experienced first-hand the pain, challenges and struggles associated with living with the disease, decided she wanted to draw on her personal experience by providing an avenue for breast cancer victims to better understand and cope with their situation.

She co-founded Be Uplifted Inc in 2009 as a volunteer-run, not-for-profit breast cancer charity providing practical care and financial assistance during breast cancer treatment. Through her passion and commitment, Wendy exemplifies the values of leadership, generosity and service, improving the lives of so many women and men affected by breast cancer in our community.



Suzanne Clarke OAM and Lloyd Clarke OAM

LLOYD CLARKE OAM and **SUZANNE CLARKE OAM** from Brisbane received their awards *for service to domestic violence support and welfare*.

Lloyd and Suzanne have become prominent advocates for domestic violence awareness and the criminalization of coercive control after their daughter Hannah and her three children were tragically killed in a domestic violence incident.

To honour Hannah and her children and to ensure that no family should endure this pain again, Lloyd and Suzanne and their family started a movement for change: **SMALL STEPS 4 HANNAH**

Through **SMALL STEPS 4 HANNAH**, Suzanne and Lloyd want to empower victims to speak up, help family members to be aware of those who may be in an unsafe environment, and create a safe place for those who need it most.



Natasha Johnston OAM

NATASHA JOHNSTON OAM from Chinchilla received her award *for service to the community through drought relief*.

In January 2014, Natasha and a fellow co-worker from Chinchilla, on hearing stories of struggling farmers unable to afford to put food on their tables due to the ongoing drought, decided they would do something to alleviate the situation.

They organised some fundraising to help a family in need and from this simple act of kindness Natasha founded **DROUGHT ANGELS** (now known as **FARM ANGELS**), a service which offered care packages and financial assistance to drought-stricken farming families across Australia but which now extends its assistance for all natural disasters.

Natasha's strong commitment and passion uplifts our farmers in hard times, helping to reduce rates of depression and suicide, and keep farmers on their land.

All five award recipients are shining examples of the great Australian ideal of offering support and encouragement to fellow Australians through their respective causes. They represent the very essence of the type of quiet achievers that deserve recognition through an award in the Order of Australia. Indeed, the nation is richer for the collective contribution of all award recipients recognised in the Order.



EVENTS

NT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM of the NT Branch of the Association was held on 11 March in Parliament House, with 45 members in attendance, including OAA National President Vicki O'Halloran AO CVO. The AGM was privileged to have Dr Tanzil Rahman, Parliamentary Member for the Northern Territory electorate of Fong Lim and Assistant Minister for International Students, Migration and Population, as our guest speaker. Tanzil grew up in Darwin, attended the University of Sydney where he graduated with a BMus as well as an LLB, then spread his wings overseas, earning a doctorate from Oxford University in Applied Economic Geography. Wearing his grandfather's OAM insignia, he made connections with all in the room by sharing personal experiences and reflecting on the honour of doing service for the community. The AGM learned of the departure of The Hon. Jane Aagaard AM from our committee, farewelling her with appreciation for her distinguished service. Three new members were elected: Helen Summers OAM, Jaya Srinivas OAM, and Marie-Louise Pearson OAM. We congratulate these members on their honours and willingness to serve.



Dr Tanzil Rahman



(L-R): Helen Summers OAM, Jaya Srinivas OAM, Marie-Louise Pearson OAM

NT BRANCH

OFFICE HOLDERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair

Alan James OAM

Secretary

David De Silva AM

Treasurer

Aminul Islam OAM

Membership

Linda Fazldeen AM

Committee Members

Floss Roberts AM

Wayne Kraft AM

Helen Summers OAM

Jaya Srinivas OAM

Marie-Louise Pearson OAM

NT BRANCH REPRESENTATION AT SYD25

Marie-Louise Pearson OAM and Linda Fazldeen AM represented the NT Branch at the Order of Australia Association National Conference held in Sydney in May.

As a first-time attendee, Marie-Louise

expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to connect with fellow members of the Association and praised the exceptional quality of the speakers. Having attended several conferences before, Linda noted how each conference consistently reflects the nature of the host community. She remarked that, once again, the presentations were thought-provoking

and highly relevant to contemporary issues.

At the AGM, Marie-Louise and Linda engaged in discussions formally and informally, focusing on key topics, including increasing the number and diversity of Association members, addressing the challenges of engaging members in regional and remote areas, and improving the speed of nomination processing.



(L-R): OAA President Hon. Vicki O'Halloran AO CVO, General The Hon. Sir Peter Cosgrove AK AC (Mil) CVO MC (Retd), Linda Fazldeen AM, Marie-Louise Pearson OAM



CHAIR'S REPORT

Judy Hogben AM
Branch Chair
chairwa@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

The last few months have been very busy for the WA Branch, and particularly busy for me as I take over the leadership reins from Bettine Heathcote AM. But with the help of all at both the Branch and national levels, and particularly Bettine, we are progressing our agenda through an active calendar of events to promote the

Order, celebrating outstanding service and of course, encourage nominations.

In pursuit of this, the Branch was part of a very successful Open Day (12-13 April) at Government House. This annual event is an opportunity to visit Government House and its gardens. Many thousands of people attended over the weekend, with hundreds visiting our table and chatting about the Order and the nomination process. Our newly printed bookmarks celebrating 50 years of The Order of Australia were extremely popular, with approximately 300 distributed.

WA sent 23 delegates to the national conference in Sydney and all were inspired by the wonderful range of speakers, events and welcoming effort by the NSW team. Congratulations and thank you!

Two investitures at Government House are to be held in the week commencing 12 May. These will be for the Australia Day recipients and are always much anticipated events.

Our next events include the annual church service at St George's Cathedral (15 June) and a NAIDOC week event which is yet to be organised in July.

EVENTS

OAAWA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 2 FEBRUARY

Members and guests of OAAWA met on 22 February in the upper room of the Matilda Bay Restaurant overlooking the Swan River for the Branch's Annual General Meeting. This was the last meeting as Chair for Bettine Heathcote AM, a member of the Committee for nine years, who has led the WA Branch for the past six years. We are very grateful for her leadership, especially

in organising a very successful national conference in Perth in 2024.

Bill Hassell AM JP has completed nine years on the committee, and we are grateful for his wise counselling and work. There was no election of members for the committee as nominations covered the required posts.

National Chair MAJGEN Barry Nunn AO RFD ED (Retd) acknowledged Bettine's three terms on the committee and two terms as chair. Following closing of the meeting, a delicious brunch was served.



(L-R): Bettine Heathcote AM and Judy Hogben AM

WA BRANCH

OFFICE HOLDERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair

Judy Hogben AM

Secretary

Margaret Lobo AM

Treasurer

Michael Lee OAM

WA Nominated Board Director

Clive Robartson AM

Membership Secretary

Lorraine Hammond AM

WA contribution to The Order editor

Jackie Scurlock OAM

Committee Members

Ronald Louis OAM JP

Brad Norman AM

Rebecca Tolstoy AM

Claire Brittain AM

Events Coordinator – Co-opted Member

Bettine Heathcote AM

Coordinator of the Police Patron Scheme

Michael Bleus OAM

Great Southern Group of the WA Branch Convenor

Jan Savage OAM JP

Southwest Group of the WA Branch Convenor

Hon Barry House AM

Peel Group of the WA Branch Convenor

Prof Jan Barker AM

Email: wabranch@theorderofaustralia.asn.au
Mobile: 0418 865 313

Mail: General Correspondence:

The Hon. Secretary,
26B Albemarle Street,
Scarborough WA 6019

Financial Correspondence:

The Hon. Treasurer
PO Box 477
West Perth WA 6872

AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS RECEPTION, 12 MARCH

The OAAWA reception to welcome Australia Day Honours awardees held at RAAFA hosted 79 awardees, members and guests in a very convivial atmosphere.



Peter John Kennedy AM

Chair Judy Hogben AM welcomed everyone and congratulated the awardees on their honours. As their citations were read out, all were amazed at the variety of the work and commitment of these awardees.

Peter John Kennedy AM responded on behalf of the recipients of the Australia Day Honours. Peter had been overwhelmed with the response to the announcement of the awards. He commented that the WA component was drawn from a broad section of the community from all over the state, from the East Kimberley Region in the north to Leonora in the Goldfields and the agricultural areas in the south.

Peter also reminded us that it is 50 years since the Order of Australia Awards were introduced by the Whitlam Government in 1975. He concluded with, "the Awards have become firmly entrenched in our national life ... But we know with that privilege go certain responsibilities as well ... we won't forget that". Peter thanked the OAAWA, on behalf of the awardees, for their hospitality and making everyone feel welcome.

National Chair MAJGEN Barry Nunn AO RFD ED (Retd) offered his congratulations and noted that the awards also recognise the work of partners, friends and colleagues.

The evening concluded with a delicious supper as the awardees mingled with members and guests.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE OPEN DAYS IN APRIL

During the Boorloo Heritage Festival, Government House and gardens were open to the public. The Order of Australia Association WA was invited to attend to encourage nominations. Our table was strategically placed near the door as the public who toured the House left. Over the weekend we were able to talk to many participants including Fat Cat and encourage them to nominate suitable individuals.



Judy Hogben AM, Fat Cat and Clive Robartson AM

WA AT SYD25 NATIONAL CONFERENCE, 1-4 MAY

Twenty-three members from the WA Branch attended this very special conference. The whole programme was thoroughly enjoyed by the delegates, and it truly celebrated 50 years since the inauguration of The Order of Australia awards in 1975.



(L-R): Clive Robartson AM, John Harland AM, Judy Hogben AM, Bettine Heathcote AM, John McKay, Claire Britain OAM



Richard Cohen and Lynne Cohen AM (seated); Ron Louis OAM (standing)



CHAIR'S REPORT

Tony Metcalf OAM

Branch Chair

chairsa@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

This has been a period of commemoration, with our members marking Air Force's 104th Anniversary on 31 March, through to their participation in Anzac events and a special commemoration to mark the 75th Anniversary of the start of Australia's involvement in the Malayan Emergency on 31 May 1950. At the same time, we are celebrating the creation of the Order of Australia 50 years ago by Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Our Regional Groups and Honours Fellowship Group have held their scheduled events, and nominations for our Student Citizenship Awards programme are being submitted. Amy Wallace from Scotch College, our 2024 Student Citizen of the Year, was Guest Speaker at our AGM on Saturday 8 March.

On the topic of the Student Citizenship Awards, I am pleased to announce that this programme has received a much appreciated offer of support from the Hon. Blair Boyer MP, Minister for Education, Training and Skills. The Minister has agreed to provide the SA Branch with a grant of \$4,500 over three years, which will allow us to present an engraved and cased Student Citizenship Awards medallion to every successful nominee in 2025, 2026 and 2027.

Once again, on behalf of all SA Branch members, I would like to congratulate everyone who received an award in the 2025 Australia Day Honours List, several of whom we acknowledged personally at our recent New Recipients' Reception.

Finally, I thank Her Excellency the Hon. Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia, for agreeing to be the Guest Speaker for our King's Birthday Luncheon. Her Excellency's support as Branch Patron is greatly appreciated.

EVENTS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 8 MARCH

The SA Branch held its 39th AGM in the Victoria Room of the Edinburgh Hotel on Saturday 8 March. The Guest Speaker was Amy Wallace from Scotch College who, as a Year 11 student last year, was selected as the 2024 South Australian Student Citizen of the Year. Amy's citation states that she is: "an extraordinarily gifted and inspirational young person". In an address titled 'Active Citizenship', Amy described the myriad of high-value service activities and initiatives that have led to her various accomplishments. In particular, she gave us an insightful and interesting summary of her accomplishments and spoke of her passion for volunteering:

"Volunteering is about finding purpose, building connections and making a real difference, one small act of kindness at a time. As active citizens, we have the power to shape our communities and create positive change right here, right now. That's why I love volunteering – it's where passion meets purpose."



AGM Guest Speaker Amy Wallace from Scotch College

SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH

OFFICE HOLDERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Patron

The Honourable Frances Adamson AC

Chair

Tony Metcalf OAM

Deputy Chair

Noel Hender OAM BEM

Secretary

John Phillips OAM

Treasurer

John Ziesing OAM

Member Secretary SA

Greg Gordon OAM JP

Student Citizenship Awards

Convenor

Noel Hender OAM BEM

Regional Groups Coordinator

Ken Coventry OAM JP (co-opted)

Merchandise Officer

Cathy Chong AM JP

Editor/Webmaster

Paul Rosenzweig OAM JP

Other Committee Members

Deborah De Williams AM

Don Clark OAM

Toni Cocchiaro OAM

Flavia de Pasquale OAM

Pamela Rajkowski OAM

Branch Nominated Director

Noel Hender OAM BEM

Website

<https://www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/sa/about-us/>

Regional Contacts

Eyre Peninsula Group

Wendy Holman OAM

wendy.holman@bigpond.com

Fleurieu Regional Group

John Hutchinson OAM

johnhutc@bigpond.com

Riverland and Mallee Regional Group

Tim Grieger OAM JP

tgrieger@riverland.net.au

South East Regional Group

Eric Roughana AM

roseric1@bigpond.com

Yorke Peninsula Regional Group

Elaine Bussenschutt OAM (Kadina)

elaine@yp-connect.net



Our members present all agreed that, with emerging leaders like Amy, the country is in good hands.

We congratulate Branch Committee member Don Clark OAM, who has been re-elected for a second term, as well as Cathy Chong AM JP, Deborah DeWilliams AM and Toni Cocchiaro OAM who had each filled casual vacancies throughout 2024-25 and have now been elected as Branch Committee members.

Branch Chair Tony Metcalf OAM said in his report: "On behalf of the Branch and personally, I thank all of our committee members and Regional Group convenors for the work that they have done for the Association during the last year, and in particular Ken Coventry OAM, our co-opted Regional Group Coordinator, for the time he has put in assisting our Regional Groups. I also record our thanks to other member volunteers and partners of our committee members who have assisted at our functions over the year".



Branch Committee members Don Clark OAM and Cathy Chong AM JP

FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEONS

For the Fellowship Luncheon held at the Naval, Military and Air Force Club on Thursday 27 February, the guest speaker was Reverend Brenton Daulby OAM JP, on "The Australian Naval & Military Expeditionary Force, 1914". Brenton was awarded the OAM in the General Division, *for service to the community through chaplaincy roles supporting serving and retired police and defence force personnel* (AD07). This unique and largely overlooked Australian force was raised for overseas service in 1914, well before the famed Dardanelles deployment and much-lauded landing on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

Following this theme, the Fellowship Luncheon speaker on Thursday 17 April was Major Paul Rosenzweig OAM (Retd) on the topic "Anzackery – misinterpreting the Anzac legend". Paul received the 2001 Centenary Medal *for long and outstanding research on Australia's military history*, and was later awarded the OAM *for service to military history preservation* (QB17).

In May, the SA Branch supported the Government House Open Day and on Monday 12 May held a New Recipients' Reception for awardees announced in the 2025 Australia Day Honours List and from other Honours Lists not previously acknowledged. On Saturday 7 June the SA Branch holds its annual King's Birthday Luncheon, with Her Excellency the Governor as guest speaker.



The Fellowship Luncheon group on Thursday 27 February, with guest speaker Reverend Brenton Daulby OAM JP third from the left



The Fellowship Luncheon group on Thursday 17 April, with guest speaker Major Paul Rosenzweig OAM (Retd) centre rear

AROUND THE REGIONS

South East. Regional Groups Coordinator Ken Coventry OAM JP reports that the South East Regional Group held its annual luncheon at the Mount Gambier RSL on Friday 28 February. A local resident, Alan Richardson, spoke about the renewal of the rail line to Heywood in Victoria, which would see a very positive impact on the timber industry and potentially other business groups. The presentation provided a detailed overview of the work done to date to identify the positive feasibility of renewal.



Maureen Christie AM thanks Alan Richardson for his interesting address to the South East Regional Group

Riverland and Mallee. Regional Convenor Tim Grieger OAM JP reports that the Riverland and Mallee Regional Group held its luncheon meeting on Friday 28 March at the Renmark Club. The guest speaker was John Angove AM, who was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2011, *for service to the Australian wine industry, to the promotion of the wine export market, to professional development and research, and to a range of arts, conservation and charitable organisations.*



John Angove AM (centre), guest speaker at the Riverland and Mallee Regional Group luncheon, with SA Branch Chair Tony Metcalf OAM (L) and Regional Groups Coordinator Ken Coventry OAM JP

STUDENT CITIZENSHIP AWARDS UPDATE

The SA Branch website is now live, calling for nominations for the 2025 Student Citizenship Awards. An innovation for this year is the naming of the primary trophy of the Award programme, which is awarded to the South Australian Student Citizen of the Year, as "The Keith 'Chook' Fowler OAM Award for the Student Citizen of the Year". This trophy will be funded through a generous donation from the family of the late Keith 'Chook' Fowler OAM (1920-2023).

In past years, the Top 10 recipients of Student Citizenship Awards ('With Distinction') received a certificate signed by Her Excellency the Governor and the SA Branch Chair, as well as a medallion mounted on a wooden trophy. Those who were 'Highly Commended' received a certificate and a cased medallion. Other recipients of the Award received just a signed certificate. An initiative the SA Branch was able to introduce was the expansion of the programme to see the inclusion of a cased medallion for all successful nominees in 2023 and 2024.

This was made possible through two generous donations by Branch member Keith 'Chook' Fowler OAM. Fortunately, Chook was able to see this initiative enacted before he passed away on 30 November 2023 at the age of 103, and we now honour his legacy through "The Keith 'Chook' Fowler OAM Award".

Further to this progress, in January 2024 we received a letter of support for the Student Citizenship Awards programme from the Hon. Blair Boyer MP, Minister for Education, Training and Skills. The Minister praised the exceptional work carried out by the SA Branch in organising these awards, and said that he, "greatly valued the work of the Association to promote and celebrate student citizenship through these prestigious awards".

The Minister acknowledged the generous contribution from the late 'Chook' Fowler OAM, and indicated that his Department would be pleased to offer similar support to ensure the continuation of the practice of presenting a medallion to all awardees.

Subsequently, the Minister has announced that a grant of \$4,500 would be paid to the SA Branch at a rate of \$1,500 per year over the three-year period 2025 to 2027 inclusive. This allows us to present an engraved and cased Student Citizenship Awards medallion to every successful nominee during this period. To ensure the perpetuity of this initiative beyond 2027, the Branch Committee intends to develop a strategy to advocate for the cost of the medallions to be shared across the public and private education authorities.



In addition to their glass trophy, each recipient of "The Keith 'Chook' Fowler OAM Award" for the South Australian Student Citizen of the Year will also receive this descriptive statement on a card



CHAIR'S REPORT

Fred Harrington OAM
Branch Chair
chairvic@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

In this, my first report as Victoria Branch Chair following the Victoria Branch 2025 Annual General Meeting, I thank members for the opportunity to serve as your Victoria Branch Chair and Dr Helene Bender AM for her commitment as Branch Chair over the past seven years. I also thank those committee members who retired from the committee.

I am looking forward to working with the new committee including Jill Page OAM as the new Victoria Branch Secretary and Dr Luz Restrepo OAM as the new Victoria Branch Treasurer.

I look forward to working with the Victoria Branch committee and our Regional Groups this year to provide a focus on three areas: membership growth, membership retention and membership participation.

The Inspiring Australians Oration preceded the AGM on Friday 28 March. The Oration was delivered by John Wylie AC, and OAA Foundation 2004 scholarship recipient Dr Felicia Eng provided an update on her studies, employment and community involvement. An article on the Oration is included below.

The next Victoria Branch event will be our mid-year lunch on Tuesday 22 July at the Stamford Plaza Melbourne. Our guest speaker will be 2024 Australia Day Honours and Awards recipient Dr Jenny Gowan AM, speaking on the topic "Safe use of medicines".

There will also be a presentation from a recipient of an Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholarship. Details of this event including booking details are noted below.

The Branch is fortunate to have 13 Regional Groups throughout Victoria with each providing an annual programme of activities and events for their members, to complement the programmes undertaken by the Branch. I thank our Regional Groups Coordinator Barb Brook OAM for the work she does in liaising with and supporting Regional Groups and their programmes.

VICTORIA BRANCH

OFFICE HOLDERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Patron

The Governor of Victoria,
 Her Excellency Professor the
 Hon. Margaret Gardener AC

Chair

Fred Harrington OAM
chairvic@theorderofaustralia.asn.au
 Mobile: 0417 116 304

Deputy Chair

Trevor Clark OAM

Secretary

Jill Page OAM

Treasurer

Dr Luz Restrepo OAM

Branch Nominated Director

Grahame Leonard AM

Editor VIC contribution to The Order

Dr Teresa De Fazio OAM
victheordermag@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Membership Secretary

Fred Harrington OAM
oaavicmbrsec@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Regional Groups Coordinator

Barb Brook OAM
vicrgcoord@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Committee

Dr Helene Bender AM
 Beverley Pinder OAM

EVENTS

INSPIRING AUSTRALIANS ORATION, 28 MARCH

The 2025 Inspiring Australians Oration was delivered by John Wylie AC at The Angliss Conference Centre on Friday 28 March 2025. John Wylie AC is CEO and Founder of leading Australian alternative asset investment firm Tanarra. John and his wife Myriam through their Foundation support education, sport, disadvantage, well-being, indigenous and community programmes.

John was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2007 and elevated to a Companion of the Order in 2022.

2004 Order of Australia Association Foundation inaugural scholarship recipient Dr Felicia Eng gave Association members, guests and students from St Catherine's School and Strathcona Girls Grammar an update on her employment and community commitments over the past 21 years. Felicia graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) and Bachelor of Science in 2007 from the University of Melbourne, majoring in Economics and Computer Science.

To pay tribute to the contribution of Paul

Wheelton AM to this annual event, the Victorian Branch will rename the event as the Paul Wheelton AM Inspiring Australians Oration from 2026.

Rowan, a Year 10 student from Strathcona Girls Grammar, was among a group of students invited to the Oration by Paul Wheelton AM, a past parent and significant supporter in the Strath community.

Rowan described the 2025 Oration as reflecting on the country we live in today, its beauty, its strengths, its improvements, and the importance of educating and empowering the next generation. John Wylie mentioned Australian pride and the progress we've made while mentioning forthcoming concerns especially in economics including the growth of our economy, funding and other issues and their lack of progress. He also provided pointers and solutions to these problems, in which one stood out: the role of young people. John emphasised how important it is to "embrace the possibility of failure" and listen to the voice of the younger generation. His realistic yet hopeful and inspiring speech allowed those present to consider their own position in the world and understand his concerns for the future.

The second speech delivered by Dr Felicia Eng, a recipient of a scholarship from the Order of Australia Association Foundation, talked about how taking even the smallest chances can get you places you've never dreamed of being. She told her story of "taking every opportunity with two hands" and how with persistence and resilience, we can all achieve great things. As a student, Rowan believed this made her reflect on her own academic journey and how every opportunity she had taken along the way had given her the knowledge and experience she has today.



(L-R): Paul Wheelton AM, Dr Felicia Eng, John Wylie AC

AROUND THE REGIONS

GIPPSLAND REGIONAL GROUP – ANZAC DAY 2025

Marking 110 years since the landing at Gallipoli, an estimated crowd of more than 1,000 members of the community gathered at Traralgon's Cenotaph in the Kay Street Gardens to commemorate ANZAC Day this year.

The main service was presided over by the Chair of the Gippsland Regional Group of the Order of Australia Association, Lieutenant Colonel Doug Caulfield OAM RFD (Retd) who has for many years acted as Master of Ceremonies for the event.

The Traralgon RSL sub-branch committee opted to have a young person from the community deliver the ANZAC Day address this year and was fortunate to have local teenager, Amelia van Vliet, talk to the assembled audience about her quest to walk the Kokoda Track and what it meant to her.



Lieutenant Colonel Doug Caulfield OAM RFD (Retd) and Amelia van Vliet, the Marsh/Tierney Scholarship recipient, following the ANZAC Day service at Traralgon

Amelia, who was the recipient of the inaugural Marsh/Tierney Scholarship, told how she responded to a call for submissions by a local MP and lodged an essay about her quest to walk Kokoda. Following the successful submission of her essay she was granted a face-to-face interview with ex-service representatives from the Traralgon RSL who deemed her to be a suitable applicant to take out the award. As a local secondary school student from Kurnai College, Amelia impressed the selection panel with the standard of her application and was offered the scholarship, worth \$6,300.

The scholarship is an opportunity for a year 11 student from the Morwell electorate to participate in a Kokoda Trek during the July school holidays. This once-in-a-lifetime chance is offered by the local Member for Morwell, Martin Cameron MLA. The selected student has the opportunity to join him and other parliamentarians on this epic trip.

Amelia talked about her motivation to submit her application in her ANZAC Day address, which truly touched many in the crowd. She shared that the reason behind her quest to walk the track was to honour a commitment her father, Ewan, had made some 15 years earlier to walk the track in memory of his grandfather who fought in the New Guinea campaign. Unfortunately, the plane in which her father and 12 others were travelling crashed into a mountain en route to the start point of the trek, and there were no survivors.

"I got the chance last year to trek the Kokoda Trail in honour of my father, Ewan, and great-grandfather Ted Holiday and soldiers who fought for us," she told the crowd. "I share with my great-grandfather the experience of lifelong camaraderie through Kokoda. I now have lifelong friends that I call family. It has expanded my social network, which I will take into my future".

The wreath laying ceremony associated with the service also provided an opportunity for the President of the City of Traralgon Band, Alan Wilson OAM, to place a floral tribute on behalf of the Gippsland Regional Group of the OAA, a gesture that has been adopted by the Regional Group in recent years.

White doves were also released as part of the solemn programme of remembrance at the Cenotaph which was surrounded by school children, scouts, guides and families from across the surrounding district.

Lest we forget

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS WIMMERA GROUP – ANNUAL LUNCHEON

The Sunday 18 May Annual Luncheon hosted Judy Ryan OAM as the guest speaker. Judy was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in the 2022 Queen's Birthday honours *for service to community health in a range of programmes*. Notably, after seeing a huge need in the community, Judy launched a successful grassroots campaign in 2016 for a medically supervised injecting facility in her community. This facility opened in 2018 and is now recognised internationally as a sound model. It has saved many lives and offers rehabilitation, mental health, medical, housing, dental and legal support services.

Victoria Branch Chair Fred Harrington OAM attended the lunch and presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Secretary Jean Wise OAM, acknowledging her commitment to the Victoria Branch through her involvement, over many years, as the Regional Group's representative at the Victoria Branch Regional Groups' meetings.



Vic Chair Fred Harrington OAM with Jean Wise OAM



FEATURED MEMBER

TESSA SULLIVAN OAM



Tessa Sullivan OAM with Governor Margaret Gardner AC at the April 2025 Investiture Ceremony

Tessa Sullivan OAM received her award *for services to the community through a range of organisations*. Tessa is an active community advocate and leader. In fact, in recognition of her contribution, Tessa became the Honorary Consul of Thailand for Victoria in 2021.

Tessa was born and raised in Thailand, educated in Singapore and then came to Australia to finish her tertiary studies. She adopted Australia as her home, and is very proud to contribute actively in community building.

With a varied skillset and curiosity for community engagement, Tessa has worked as a journalist with the Bangkok International Film Festival, the Government of Thailand and Network Ten.

However, Tessa's true calling has been the law. She is a lawyer and Officer of the Supreme Court of Victoria and is a qualified mediator and arbitrator certified by the Australian Centre for Justice Innovation. She has worked in the fields of immigration, human rights, family and criminal law. Her personal mission is to contribute towards a more socially just world, and ensure everyone has access to justice as well as the means to fulfil their potential.

Tessa's participation in the field of law has led her to heading the International Studies and Student Committee for the North

American-Australian Lawyers Alliance (NAALA), which provides a link between Australia and North America. She has translated her own experiences of studying at Harvard into a scholarship and now supports other students to apply for Ivy League education through her own scholarship.

It is through lived experience that she has a particular understanding of and passion for ensuring barriers for people with disabilities are challenged. She has been an Executive Committee Board member for Blind Sports and Recreation since 2017.

Tessa founded the Thai-Australia Chamber of Commerce and opened the Family and Children's committee to support women and children. In response to the devastating Boxing Day tsunami, Tessa did not hesitate to step up to support in many ways, including providing translation of documents.

Apart from contributing and supporting festivals and grassroots events in the Thai community, Tessa also works as a casual academic and lecturer of law at the University of New England.

She won the silver medal at the Parisian 9th International Chamber of Commerce Mediation Competition. Further, in 2020, Tessa was named as one of the 40 Under 40 Most Influential Asian-Australians for recognition of her work in government and for breaking the bamboo and glass ceiling in being the first Thai national ever elected to Australian Government and in creating legislative changes to workplace protection laws.

Receiving the Order of Australia means a lot to Tessa. As a Thai Australian she feels humbled and honoured. "I actually feel emotional", she says. Tessa is grateful for the opportunities Australia has offered her and now her young family. She also admits that the recognition feels rather surreal. "My grandfather was a street noodle vendor, so it means a lot to me and my family, from many perspectives."

Notably, Tessa is the first Thai-Australian to be awarded an Order of Australia and hopes that this inspires others in the Thai community to step forward to be acknowledged for their contributions to Australian society. While in the Thai culture humility and selflessness are values which are highly esteemed, Tessa feels that it is important for other Thai-Australian community-active members to step forward as positive role models for all.

VICTORIA BRANCH UPCOMING EVENT

Mid-Year Lunch in Melbourne CBD

Date: Tuesday 22 July

Venue: Stamford Plaza Melbourne.

111 Little Collins Street, Melbourne

Close to metropolitan, regional and rural public transport options

Time: 12.15pm registration

Speaker: Dr Jenny Gowan AM

Jenny is an accredited consultant pharmacist and conducts her own company focusing on medication reviews in the home and aged care facilities, plus education, writing, training and consultation in the safety and quality of medicines. Jenny enjoys working in a multi-disciplinary environment and has worked sessionally in GP practices at community health centres for the past 14 years.



Dr Jenny Gowan AM

In 2013 she was named Australian Pharmacist of the Year by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia and in 2016 the MIMs-AACP Consultant Pharmacist of the Year. Jenny has delivered talks at many Australian and international conferences.

In 2024 Jenny was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia *for significant service to medicine as a pharmacist, to professional societies and to community health*.

An OAA Foundation scholarship recipient will also be a speaker at the lunch.

Cost: \$70 GST included for members and guests. Two-course lunch, drinks at bar prices.

Book using TryBooking link: <https://www.trybooking.com/DBHCK>



CHAIR'S REPORT

Alastair Douglas OAM

Branch Chair

chairtas@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

At the Branch Annual General Meeting we said farewell to Dr Peter Holm OAM who retired from the Branch Committee due to ill health. Peter served the Branch for five years and brought many different and valuable perspectives on matters for consideration. Peter and his wife Libby live on the North West Coast near Burnie and

would regularly travel to Hobart to support various Branch events. On behalf of the Committee, I thank Peter and Libby for their support of the Association and wish them both all the best for what their future might bring.

On a sad note, I report that the Association's oldest member Brian Winspear AM passed away on 26 April 2025 aged 104. I was privileged to talk with Brian on several occasions in recent years and he was always a bright and happy conversationalist. A special obituary of Brian appears on page 27 of this issue of the magazine.

The Branch committee welcomes two new members to its ranks for the next three years, Anthony (Tony) Coen OAM and Dr Nicholas Chantler AM. Tony has a broad background in key roles with many varied organisations and Nicholas returns to Branch Committee following a year away. It will be nice to have Nicholas back in our ranks to benefit from his wide-ranging experience in work pursuits and his knowledge of the operations of the Association.

The three Regional Groups have continued to be active with varied activities including morning teas, lunches, guest speakers and visits to places of interest.

Newly elected member of the Branch Committee, Tony Coen OAM, again led the Tasmanian Police Pipe Band in the Hobart Anzac Day march. A larger than usual crowd watched the march at which Her Excellency the Hon. Barbara Baker AC Governor of Tasmania took the salute, then delivered the address at the Hobart Cenotaph. Tony (pictured) looked resplendent along with his fellow band members in his full Pipe Major uniform at the head of the band. In the north Branch committee member Major Dr Nicholas Chantler AM laid a wreath on behalf of the Association at the Launceston Cenotaph at the 11.00am service.

My wife Jenny and I were very pleased to have attended another excellent national conference. The NSW Branch put together an exciting and stimulating event, one we will remember for so many good reasons. I am sure more detail will be printed elsewhere about the speakers, the dinner and the Foundation awardees and the memorial service including the visit to HMAS Adelaide, all of which were excellent.

In early May, two ceremonies for the Australia Day recipients of awards were conducted at Government House. Between the ceremonies, the Branch congratulated awardees at a lunch at the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania. This is an important occasion where members can meet the new awardees, their families and friends and hear about some of their background and contributions to society that no doubt led to their consideration for an award. Seventy-five members and guests enjoyed this happy occasion to recognise their achievements.



Tony Coen OAM

TASMANIAN BRANCH

OFFICE HOLDERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Patron

Her Excellency The Hon.
Barbara Baker AC
Governor of Tasmania

Branch Chair

Mr Alastair Douglas OAM
Mobile: 0418 127 897

Hon Secretary

Mrs Beatrice Lawrence OAM

Hon Treasurer

Mr Ron Blake OAM

Branch Nominated Director

Dr Rosemary Callingham AM

Membership Officer

Mr Barry Easter OAM

Branch Committee

Mr Neville Bingham AFSM OAM
Mrs Belinda Hazell OAM
Dr Nicholas Chantler AM
Mr Tony Coen OAM
Dr George Merridew AM
Mrs Maureen Oates OAM
Mrs Vicki Purnell OAM

Regional Convenors

South

Mrs Belinda Hazell OAM

North

Dr George Merridew AM

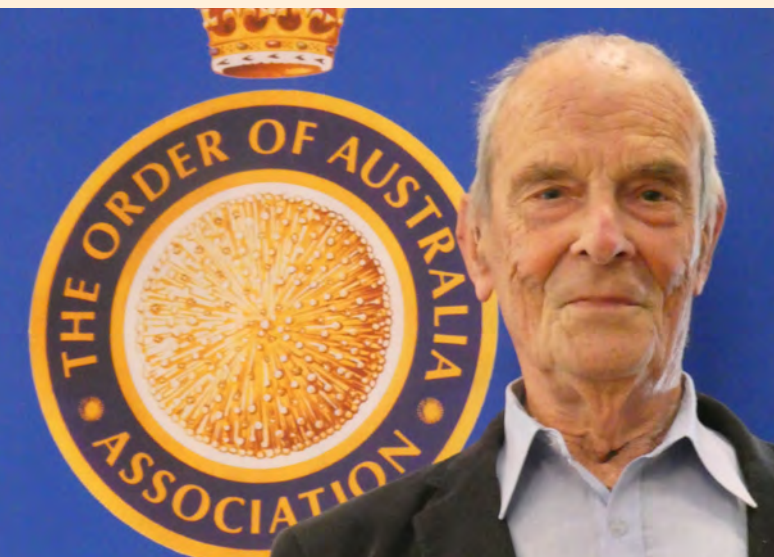
North West

Mr Rod Bramich OAM



FEATURED MEMBER

DR VIKTOR ZAPPNER OAM



Dr Viktor Zappner OAM

"Jazz! What a splendid art and also what a beautiful hobby." (Viktor Zappner)

Dr Viktor Zappner OAM, accompanied by his wife Eva and two daughters, finally arrived in Australia on 24 March 1979 after fleeing Czechoslovakia and being in a refugee camp in Germany for eight months. Viktor, 39 years old at the time, a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist by profession, settled with his family in Burnie on the North West Coast of Tasmania.

Viktor began working as a Guidance Officer in schools for the Education Department, a position he held for 27 years before retiring in 2006. Before fleeing to Australia, Viktor had been a member of the International Group for Music Therapy based in East Germany and was also a co-leader of the Working Group for Music Therapy attached to the Section for Psychotherapy of the Psychiatric Society in Prague.

Born in 1936, Viktor began his lifelong involvement with music from a very young age and was just 13 years old when he formed his own band. In the late 1950s he began a professional career in the swing and jazz scene and was able to travel the world as a musician onboard cruise ships around Europe and North and South America playing several genres of music.

With his passion for music, it came as no surprise that, once Viktor and his family had settled in Tasmania, he immersed himself in everything jazz, not only playing but also promoting and organizing events and festivals. Dismayed at the lack of a jazz scene in the region, he founded the local Jazz Action Society in the early 1980s and was President until 2011. Viktor was the driving force behind the inception of the Devonport Jazz Festival in 2002 both as its co-founder and musical director.

Viktor remained the festival's musical director until 2016, and its success is ongoing to this day. Designed to get people out and about during the colder winter months, the Devonport Jazz Festival was the first of many mid-winter festivals which have since developed in various regions of Tasmania, contributing significantly to the cultural and economic landscape of the state.

For more than 75 years Viktor, a "Living Legend" and stalwart of the Tasmanian jazz community, has played alongside many local and international artists in thousands of performances both in Tasmania and internationally. During that time, he has received many accolades including being named the 2012 Tasmanian Local Hero in the Australian of the Year Awards and the Medal of the Order of Australia in the General Division (OAM) in 2013 *for service to the arts through the introduction and promotion of jazz in North West Tasmania*.



Dr Viktor Zappner second from left in New York 1969



Dr Viktor Zappner OAM

VALE

DARWIN BOMBING VETERAN BRIAN WINSPEAR AM GAVE HIS ALL TO AUSTRALIA

Obituary by Tom Lewis

One of the last veterans who experienced the first WWII air raid on Darwin has died. Brian Winspear AM, a Hobart resident, was 104.

Brian signed up for the war from Tasmania in 1939. He said later he was sure the blue uniform of the Royal Australian Air Force would impress his girlfriends, a comment typical of a man who went through life with a sense of humour that carried him through some very dark hours. For Brian was a gunner in bombers, an extremely hazardous profession that saw the personnel of many Australian squadrons die in their hundreds. Brian kept a long list of those who died in his units, and he was later tireless in having a memorial plaque placed on Darwin's Esplanade to his fallen comrades.

Serving in twin-engined Hudsons, Beauforts, and later in Vultee Vengeance dive-bombers, Brian Winspear was in one of the last aircraft to fly into Darwin on that fateful day the Imperial Japanese Navy arrived. The war that had spread to the Pacific with the Pearl Harbour raids of December 1941 was being fiercely resisted by the Allies as the Japanese war machine swept south. It was far more efficient than had been anticipated: the extremely capable navy and army of the enemy drove the Americans out of the Philippines, the Dutch out of South-East Asia, and conquered Singapore in a matter of weeks. The Allies had resisted but were steadily pushed back and Brian's Hudson, with him manning the machineguns in the rear turret, was packed with troops as it flew into Darwin.

One hundred and eighty-eight Zeroes, Val dive-bombers and Kate vertical bombers struck Darwin at 10 on the morning of 19 February. They were excellent aircrews, experienced from China as well as Pearl Harbour, and they sank 11 ships that day, destroyed 30 aircraft, and killed 236 people. A second raid targeted the RAAF base, and Brian saw it all from a trench with his steel helmet on. It was not his first brush with death. He had seen many men die already in aircraft accidents, and he later wrote about it all in *Tasmanians in the Air*, which he co-edited, and *My Back-Seat War*.

Following the raid, one of Brian's duties was to guard Hajime Toyoshima, a Zero pilot who had been captured by a local Indigenous man, Matthias, and handed over to the Forces. Toyoshima, the first prisoner taken on Australian soil, was soon sent south to Cowra Prisoner of War Camp, where he became one of the leaders of the massive breakout in 1944.

Brian was recommended for officer training, and to be retrained as a navigator. The rest of the war saw him flying out of New Guinea as well as on coastal anti-submarine patrols around Australia's coasts. He was demobbed in November 1945 as a flight-lieutenant.

Post-war Brian went into business with the same determination that had filled him in the war. He acquired a service-station in Bicheno, on Tasmania's east coast, and then a hotel, which was the start of Innkeepers, a chain of hotels which spread to the mainland, eventually becoming 20 establishments in five states. He married Shirley, later a successful painter, and was awarded an Order of Australia in 1993 *for services to the tourism industry and the community*. A regular and much-loved attendee at the 19 February commemoration every year in Darwin, Brian wore his old uniform with pride, and spoke

readily to the media about his service. Shirley predeceased him. He leaves behind six children, a host of their descendants, and a most grateful nation.

Dr Tom Lewis OAM is a military historian. Brian Winspear's stories featured in several of his 23 books.



Brian Winspear checks out a bomber gun turret (Great Southern Rail)



RAAF No. 23 Squadron Lockheed Hudson aircraft in 1940. (Colourized photo via Photographic Training Flight, RAAF Base East Sale)



RAAF recruiting poster WWII (Public domain)



Journeying to Darwin on the Anzac Ghan in 2012, Brian salutes the memory of fallen comrades at Adelaide River War Cemetery (Great Southern Rail)



CHAIR'S REPORT

Andrew Phelan AM

Branch Chair

chairact@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

The ACT Branch 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 also congratulate MAJGEN (Retd) Michael

Crane DSC and Bar, AM on his election as the new Branch Nominated Director.

Committee member Group Captain (Retd) Phil Morrall AM CSC gave an entertaining and comprehensive presentation on the history of the Order 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 contributions to the history of The Order and the Association are available on the ACT Events page on the Association's website.

Monica and I thoroughly enjoyed attending the national conference in Sydney in May. Congratulations to NSW Chair and Convenor Dr John Gullotta AM and his team for their outstanding organisational efforts.

On behalf of all members, I congratulate all honours recipients announced in the 2025 Australia Day Honours List, in particular the recipients from the ACT and region. Branch Committee members had the pleasure of attending the Investiture ceremonies at Government House in May, and the Branch held a reception to honour local recipients on Wednesday 21 May 2025.

Our King's Birthday Luncheon is to be held on 11 June and planning for our Student Citizenship Awards evening on 20 August 2025 is well underway. The annual OAA-Australian National University Lecture and OAA-Australian Defence Force Oration will be held later in the year.

Warm Regards

ACT BRANCH

OFFICE HOLDERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Patron

Dr Suzanne Packer AO

Branch Nominated Director

Michael Crane DSC and Bar, AM

Chair

Andrew Phelan AM

chairact@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Mobile: 0417 267 609

Secretary

Robert Altamore OAM

Treasurer

Phil Morrall AM CSC

Committee Members

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

EVENTS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 12 FEBRUARY 2025

More than 50 members and guests attended our 2025 AGM at the Royal Canberra Golf Club in February, and nominations to the Branch Committee for 2025/26 were approved. Three new members were elected. 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 OAA-Australian National University lecture *A Possible World: Transforming Gender Relations for Sustainability*.



Professor Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt AO



Greg Hood AO

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.

Check out our website www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Julie Long OAM is ACT Branch President of the Children's Book Council of Australia and had a long association with the 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.



Julie Long OAM



Phil Morrall AM CSC

MORNING TEA WITH MAINUL HAQUE OAM, 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 Awards 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 of the Order of Australia in the 2023 King's Birthday Honours *for service to the multicultural community of Canberra*.



Mainul Haque OAM

FEATURED MEMBER

PROFESSOR ANDREW BLAKERS AO – A SOLAR POWER PIONEER



Andrew Blakers at ANU sliver array

Andrew Blakers AO FAA FTSE FRSN is Professor of Engineering at the Australian National University and a solar power pioneer. He has been working on solar energy solutions since 1979. He thought then that solar energy would ultimately be the major source of energy for the world. This has come true: solar power capacity is now being installed twice as fast around the world as everything else combined (wind + hydro + coal + gas + nuclear + etc).

In the 2024 Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering

(ATSE) awards, he was winner of the 2024 Clunies Ross Technology Innovation Award for transformational contributions to the renewable energy transition. Andrew was instrumental in designing and creating silicon solar cells in the 1980s. Alongside colleagues, he developed the PERC (Passivated Emitter and Rear Contact) solar photovoltaic cells that are at the heart of the worldwide solar industry. PERC solar panels comprise half of all solar panels ever made; have cumulative panel sales of US\$180 billion; and are mitigating 3 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions through displacement of coal generation.

For developing this technology, Andrew and his co-inventors were awarded the 2023 Queen Elizabeth Prize for Engineering (the top global prize for engineering and innovation) by King Charles III at Buckingham Palace.

Andrew also led the creation of a comprehensive global atlas of 0.8 million potential sites for off-river pumped hydro energy storage with combined storage potential equivalent to about two trillion electric vehicle batteries. Andrew's record of entrepreneurship, innovation and outreach is exemplary. He is one of Australia's top renewable energy researchers.

Andrew has authored around 500 papers and publications, and his many memberships of professional associations include Fellowship of the Australian Academy of Science, the Academy of Technological Sciences & Engineering and the Royal Society of NSW.

Professor Blakers was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in January 2025 *for distinguished service to science in the field of solar cell development, and as an advocate for energy storage and renewable technologies*

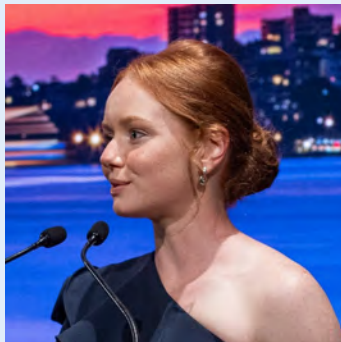


IN THEIR OWN WORDS

The Gala Dinner of the Order of Australia Association Annual Conference was indeed a night to remember. The speeches by the five awardees of the Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholarship were one of the many highlights. Those speeches are largely replicated below. The Board of the Foundation thanks every donor, university and mentor for making this possible and contributing to such a memorable evening.



Scholarship Awardees with NSW Governor, Her Excellency the Hon. Margaret Beazley AC



**JENNIFER
CORDEROY:
UNIVERSITY OF
NEW ENGLAND**

"Tonight, I am a long way from home in Central West NSW. I grew up immersed in the joys and challenges of farming life, where I found success in gratitude and making the most of every opportunity. As a child, I tried hard to find solutions to any problems Dad had on the farm. Now, I am studying Rural Science at the University of New England. I am committed to delivering practical and sustainable solutions to farmers for improved food and fibre production, and advocating for strong farming communities.

With gratitude to the Order of Australia Association Foundation, and my donor and mentor, Mr Tim Fairfax AC, this Scholarship has elevated the scope of my career to making a foundational contribution to Australia's national production and global food security.

May I have integrity, humility and generosity in all that I achieve to shine light on those supporting me. Thank you for this opportunity to represent and extend the work of the Foundation."



**JADE HARRISON:
UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY
SYDNEY**

As a third-year Bachelor of Midwifery student, it's an absolute honour to be standing here tonight. I'd like to express my sincere thanks to the Order of Australia Association NSW Branch for this incredible opportunity.

This scholarship is a powerful reminder of the importance of service, leadership and compassion in our communities. Values that are at the heart of both midwifery and civic life. It challenges me to think beyond the clinical setting and consider how I can contribute meaningfully to broader systems of care, equity and support. It's a call to action not only to serve others but to lead with purpose and integrity.

I'm especially grateful for the opportunity to be mentored by Professor Caroline Homer AO, an inspiring leader whose work continues to shape global maternal health. I'm excited for what lies ahead and truly I cannot wait to see how this opportunity shapes my career and future.



**PARIS LAY-YEE:
UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY
SYDNEY**

A wise man once said, “The best leaders are those who serve”.

As a law student, I’ve often found myself nodding in agreement reading judgements by “the Great Dissenter” who has often emphasised the importance of human rights. I am excited to receive pearls of wisdom from the brilliant mind of the wise man I just quoted, The Honourable Michael Kirby AC CMG. Thank you for generously agreeing to be my mentor.

I’d also like to extend a heartfelt thanks to Dr Helen Nugent AC for your unwavering support and stewardship on this journey. Your guidance has been invaluable, and your belief in my potential has truly inspired me.

I’m immensely grateful to the Order of Australia Association Foundation for this life-changing scholarship, which will help me pursue my lifelong dream of working with the United Nations.

If I can do half as much as my great jurist mentor has for the championship of international human rights, then I know I have served well. Thank you for giving me this incredible opportunity which will make a great difference in my life... so that one day I can make a difference for others.



**AYMAN MIAZI:
MONASH
UNIVERSITY**

It is a privilege to stand here as a recipient of the Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholarship. This opportunity will continue to shape my future and hopefully achieve my childhood dreams within the space industry, allowing me to focus on research and developing new technologies for the future of the Australian Space Industry. I am excited to learn as much as I can from my mentor Professor Alexander Smits AO; his wealth of knowledge and experience will undoubtedly shape my career.

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the Victoria branch of the Order of Australia Association for providing the scholarship that I received. I would also like to thank everyone involved in running these scholarships. Thank you as well to the selection committee for choosing me, and to Monash University for their help throughout. Finally, I would like to thank my friends and family for their continued support over the years. They have always been my first and most enthusiastic supporters, always encouraging me to reach my dreams, no matter how far they may have seemed. Now, with this scholarship in hand, I have made one big leap towards them.



**MATTHEW
SELKRIG:
UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY**

It’s an honour to be here tonight among such accomplished individuals. First, I want to express my deepest gratitude to the Order of Australia Association Foundation and its generous supporters, particularly Paul Wheelton AM KSJ, for their unwavering commitment to fostering young talent.

As one of the youngest people in the room, it’s surreal to be surrounded by such experienced professionals—meanwhile, I’m still on my green P’s!

Receiving this scholarship has not only eased financial pressures but has also reinforced my belief in the power of leadership and service. Growing up in Hong Kong and studying in Australia, I’ve learned that leadership isn’t just about personal success—it’s about creating opportunities for others. Whether in finance, sustainability or business, we all have a responsibility to contribute to something greater than ourselves.

Looking ahead, I’m inspired to use this opportunity to make a tangible impact, whether through championing sustainable investments, mentoring students or fostering innovation in Australia’s future economy. And I know I speak for my fellow scholars when I say we are deeply committed to carrying forward the values that this scholarship represents. Thank you once again for your generosity and belief in us. We will make it count.



THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION LTD

ABN 89 109 314 142

WILL YOU HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

As an awardee of the Order of Australia, you have made a distinctive contribution to Australia. The Board of the Order of Australia Association Foundation asks you to consider making a further contribution to Australia by supporting its Scholarship programme.

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.

It is life-changing for the recipient

The recipient receives \$45,000 paid over two years. For the students selected, the value of the Scholarship is life-changing.

In addition, the recipient receives a 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.

It is prestigious

The scholarship is highly regarded not just by the recipients, but also by the universities with whom we work. That prestige is enhanced by the presentation of the Scholarship awards by the Governor-General or her delegate at the Annual Dinner of the Order of Australia Association. To date, 60 Scholarships have been awarded.

It is well governed

The Board of the Foundation maintains the highest standards of governance in relation to the awards, at the same time as keeping costs to a minimum.

It is tax deductible

Any donation made to the Scholarship programme of the Foundation is tax deductible. We have a rigorous programme of acknowledging your donation and providing a receipt to enable you to claim your tax deduction.

By making a donation, you will make a real difference.

You can help by making a donation to the Order of Australia Association Foundation, no matter how large or small.

HOW TO MAKE A DONATION

Members can donate directly to the Foundation. Alternatively, members can donate to an Association National Scholarship Programme which allows Branches and individual members to contribute to a consolidated account which, when it reaches the Scholarship funding level (currently \$50,000), will allow the award of an Association Scholarship.

Donations made directly and indirectly attract DGR tax deductibility.

Donations may be made either by Credit Card or Electronic Payment:

Credit Card: Please go to the Foundation Website: www.oaafoundation.org.au

Electronic Payment:

Name of Account:	The Order of Australia Association Foundation Ltd Gift Account
BSB No:	013 006
Account No:	314 735 771

So we can provide a Tax Receipt, please advise name for Tax Receipt and details of method of payment to: sec@oaafoundation.com.au

For further information, please contact:

Chair, Order of Australia Association Foundation

Telephone: (02) 8232 8508 or (02) 6273 5995

Website: www.oaafoundation.org.au