



Welcome from VIC Branch Chair

Greetings to Order of Australia Association Ltd Vic Branch members and all 2025 Australia Day and King's Birthday Honours' recipients. I trust that you are managing to stay warm during this cold winter, but at the same time, sending good thoughts and prayers for rain to break the drought to bring some relief to the many farming communities throughout Victoria.

Congratulations to the 165 Victorians who received their Australian Honour in this year's King's Birthday Honours list. I look forward to meeting you at your forthcoming Investiture or a Vic Branch event.

I also thank all Vic Branch members who were responsible for, or assisted with, the nomination of these King's Birthday Honours recipients.

I appreciate it is always dangerous to single out individual recipients, but I specifically want to mention two King's Birthday Honours' recipients, Bruce Holland OAM and Geoff Watt OAM. I have had the privilege of serving with both on the Eltham Cemetery Trust for over 40 years. Their voluntary contribution to their communities is well above and beyond and their Australian Honour, to me, is what our Honours' system is all about.

Members also need to be aware that there is now a four years' plus time, between submitting a nomination and the outcome of that nomination.

I ask every member reading this newsletter to consider the following: *no-one, no matter who they are or what they have done, can be recognised **unless they are nominated**.*

Thank you to all members who have registered to attend the Vic Branch Mid-Year lunch being held on Tuesday 22 July at the Stamford Plaza Melbourne. If you have not already registered the details and booking arrangements are on page 2 of this E-Newsletter

I take this opportunity to thank the Central Highlands Wimmera Regional Group for the invitation to attend their recent lunch. I was pleased to have the opportunity to present a Certificate of Appreciation to Jean Wise OAM to acknowledge her commitment to the Victoria Branch as a representative of the Central Highlands Wimmera Regional Group. A full report on this event was included in the recent edition of *The Order* national magazine.

More recently I attended the informal lunch of the North Central Suburbs Regional Group to present a Certificate of Appreciation to Heather Gardner OAM, to acknowledge her membership of 10 years as a member of the Order of Australia Association.

As mentioned previously, the areas of my focus for 2025 are: *Membership Growth, Membership Retention and Membership Participation*. It is great to see Regional Groups using these three areas of focus in their activities and reports to the Regional Groups Representatives' meetings.

Happy to receive questions or comments on any matter raised in this E-Newsletter, particularly as how we progress these three points of focus of the Vic Branch committee

Fred Harrington OAM VIC Branch Chair M: 0417 116 304 E: chairvic@theorderofaustralia.asn.au



COME AND JOIN US!

You're Invited

OAA Members and their Guests

DATE: Tuesday 22 July 2025 at 12:15pm for 12:30pm

**VENUE: Stamford Plaza Melbourne Hotel,
111 Little Collins Street, Melbourne**

SPEAKER: Dr Jenny Gowan AM, PhD
The safe use of medicines- Questions to ask



Jenny is a practising pharmacist and is an accredited consultant pharmacist and conducts her own company focussing on medication reviews in the home and aged care facilities. Jenny will discuss such matters as, questions to ask your doctor? Are there any interactions with other medications? Is it safe to crush medications? What is the best times to take medication? And most as importantly - how to arrange a free Home Medicine Review?

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

*In addition, an OAA Foundation Scholarship recipient
will update members and guests about their journey*

Cost: \$70 per person GST included plus booking fee. Two course lunch, cash bar for drinks

Order of Australia Large medal may be worn at the lunch

Order of Australia Association Merchandise will be available to purchase

Please book by 5pm Friday 11th July at <https://www.trybooking.com/DBHCK>

Note: Table seating lists will be at the entrance to the restaurant, so if you have a preference to sit with another member, please indicate this when booking.

Enquiries/assistance with booking please contact Fred Harrington OAM 0417 116 304





Victoria Branch Events for 2025

All venues selected by the Victoria Branch for Events in 2025 are in the Melbourne CBD and accessible by members and guests of all abilities.

They are close to metropolitan, regional and rural public transport options.

Mid-Year Lunch in Melbourne CBD

Date: Tuesday 22 July

Venue: Stamford Plaza Melbourne 111 Little Collins Street, Melbourne

Time: 12.15pm registration

Speaker: Jenny Gowan AM. Citation: For significant service to medicine as a pharmacist, to professional societies, and to community health

An OAA Foundation scholarship recipient will update members and guests

Cost: \$70 GST included for members and guests. 2 course lunch, drinks at bar price

Bookings at <https://www.trybooking.com/DBHCK>

End of Year Dinner

Date: Thursday 20 November

Venue: Stamford Plaza Melbourne 111 Little Collins Street, Melbourne

Time: 6.15pm registration

Speaker: Georgina Gubbins OAM

Citation: For service to primary industry, and to the community

2024 OAA Foundation scholarship recipient Ayman Miazi will update members and guests

Cost: \$70 GST included for members and guests. 2 course dinner, drinks at bar price

Members and their guests are welcome to attend Victoria Branch and Regional Group Events.

OAA Victoria Branch and Regional Group Events for 2025, please refer to website:

<https://theorderofaustralia.asn.au/vic/upcoming-events/>

National Conference

Brisbane 16-19 April 2026



Ridges Southbank Hotel

News from the VIC Branch Regional Groups

Central Highlands Wimmera Regional Group

Forty members, along with their partners, gathered together for the Annual Luncheon at the Midlands RSL Ballarat. The Central Highlands Wimmera Group had the pleasure of welcoming the new Victorian Chair, Fred Harrington OAM and his wife Irene Harrington OAM, along with immediate past Chair Helene Bender AM.

Guest Speaker Judy Ryan OAM - a Churchill Fellow, spoke on the "Importance and Power of Community Activism".

Judy presented a personal account of the residents' 2016 campaign for a community based medically supervised injecting centre to save and change the lives of people with drug addiction in inner-city Melbourne. It's a story you won't read or hear about in the mainstream media. Judy also included highlights from her 2024 Churchill Fellowship tour of international drug support services.

Judy's presentation provided a different point of view to that normally heard through the media. Our members fully agreed that Judy was one of the best speakers they had ever heard at such an event. Judy Ryan OAM (photo right) was an Order of Australia (OAM) recipient in the 2022 Queen's Birthday honours for service to community health in a range of programs.



Eastern Suburbs Regional Group

The Eastern Suburbs Regional Group hosted a lunch on June 12 at Bucatini Restaurant, where Chair Geoffrey Grinton OAM welcomed 47 guests and speaker Pete Smith OAM.

Pete Smith is a well-known radio and television presenter, who, during a 60 plus year career, has been a compère, newsreader, variety performer, host and master of many other roles. His OAM was awarded in the 2004 Queen's Birthday Honours, for services to the community. Over a delicious two course lunch in a room packed to comfortable capacity, attendees heard Pete's story, which included delightful anecdotes about many famous TV personalities.

This is what we learnt about his life.

He was born and educated in Melbourne. In 1956 Pete Smith joined the Australian Broadcasting Commission where he spent eight happy years, first as a messenger boy, later as an announcer on both the home service and on Radio Australia, broadcasting globally on short-wave. Then, in the early years of television, Pete became announcer, variety host and compere of his own Saturday afternoon Sports View Hit Parade on ABC Channel 2. In 1964 Pete joined Channel 9, home of Graham Kennedy's 'In Melbourne Tonight', where he presented commercials, appeared in comedy sketches and on several occasions acted as compere. Attendees were delighted to hear the behind-the-scenes stories of many of the comedy sketches of that time.

As Pete reminisced over the years at Channel 9, we were reminded of how versatile he has been: an on-camera host for numerous specials, a National Nine newsreader, working for many years with Bert Newton on the long running 'New Faces' talent show and on the Tonight-style program, and also with Ernie Sigley and Denise Drysdale on their weekday morning program 'Ernie and Denise'. In the late 70's he also hosted his own "Tonight Show" on NWS9 in Adelaide.



News from the VIC Branch Regional Groups

Eastern Suburbs Regional Group continued

The multitalented Pete also worked in radio and film- with 3AK as a 'Good Guy', with Bert Newton on 3UZ, with comedians Tony Martin and Mick Molloy on their national drive-time show, and with the D-Generation first on radio, then following them to ABC-TV with their well-remembered 'Late Show' series. He also had parts in the motion pictures "Crackerjack" and

'Bad Eggs' and many guest appearances and other ventures.

Pete had so many interesting anecdotes to relate about all the stars he has worked with.

Finally – Pete explained how he got involved in the popular quiz program, 'Sale of the Century' and we

remembered that his was the voice that boomed out for over 21 years to welcome viewers.

He ended his very entertaining talk with video clips from some of his performances over the years.

Pete's reminiscences were told with warmth, humour and humility, captivating the audience, who commented it had been an enjoyable talk and that the day had been convivial in every way.

Photo above: Official table at the lunch.

Loddon Campaspe Regional Group

The Order of Australia Association Ltd at the National and Branch levels award substantial scholarships to worthy recipients at tertiary level. A few Regional Groups do the same for secondary and primary level students.

The Loddon-Campaspe Regional Group has decided to award an annual bursary to a student in Year 10 or who has commenced their VCE studies, who attends a school in our Region. The secondary school selection criterion is that the school community has suffered a major environmental or economic setback recently. The school selected for 2025 is Rochester Secondary College and an offer of a bursary of \$500 for a student there is being made to the Principal of Rochester Secondary College.

The student selection criteria are simple: the student must show diligence in their studies and demonstrate commitment to citizenship at school. The school principal will be responsible for the nomination. We currently have sufficient funds to carry out this project for a few years. If this project succeeds your committee will be seeking support from our members to fund the bursary on an ongoing basis. Steven Lee AM, immediate past Chair of our Loddon Campaspe



News from the VIC Branch Regional Groups

Loddon Campaspe Regional Group continued

Regional Group has been a keen advocate for such a project, which is a worthy cause and further enables our organization to meet its goals in a meaningful way.

North Central Suburbs Regional Group

Presentation to Heather Gardner OAM at a recent lunch with a Certificate of Appreciation to acknowledge her 10 year membership of the Order of Australia Association by Fred Harrington OAM North Central Suburbs Regional Group Chair.

Associate Professor Heather Gardner OAM is a 2014 Queen's Birthday recipient for service to education in the field of public health.



Upcoming VIC Branch Regional Group Events for 2025

Central Highlands Wimmera

Central Highlands Wimmera Regional Group will be holding their next meeting by ZOOM on **Sunday 6 July**, where further discussions will be held on ways to increase membership and nominations.

Eastern Suburbs

The Eastern Suburbs Regional Group is planning another event for members as a year-end function and will notify members of details.

In the meantime, our next Webinar is on **Tuesday 15 July** at 7.30pm.

Speaker is Rhett Butler AM, Founder and Chairperson of SkyJuice Foundation, which works with established NGO's and independent charities such as Rotary, Disaster Aid, MSF, Oxfam, World Vision, Islamic Relief and many others to provide unique safe water treatment solutions globally. All are welcome to attend.

Registration (free) at <https://www.trybooking.com/DBEEF>

Loddon Campaspe:

Heritage Maldon Adventure **Friday 19 September**

Package One includes return first class fares at a substantial discount on the heritage train from Castlemaine to Maldon as well as the Maldon-based program as outlined below.

Package Two includes an official welcome, escorted bus or vintage car tours of the town or the gold mining sites, a tour of the Machinery Museum, where a buffet lunch will be catered by a number of Maldon-based businesses. Local musical entertainment will be provided during our lunch. This event is a pilot project for Maldon Tourism and we have applied for a community grant from the Bendigo Bank to develop a tourism pro-forma and present a full report on the event.

Our visit will be an opportunity for members, family and friends to enjoy a wonderful experience together. Any profit will be devoted to our Secondary School Bursary Project.



Upcoming VIC Branch Regional Group Events for 2025

Loddon Campaspe continued

Maldon: A journey into the gold mining past

Friday 19 September 2025, 10:45 am - 4:15 pm.



North East & Goulburn Valley advises their next luncheon will be held at Fowles Winery, Avenel on **Sunday 12 October**. Further details will be provided closer to the date.

Refer to website: <https://theorderofaustralia.asn.au/vic/upcoming-events/> for further information regarding 2025 Regional Group Events

OAA Merchandise Shop Online

Merchandise is available to purchase for you and your friends

OAA items are also most suitable as gifts to new recipients



Pen in gift box **\$7.00**

Blank greeting card with envelope pack of 5

\$10.00

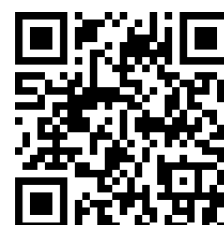


Socks **\$11.00**



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

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



Celebrating 50 Years of the Australia Honours System

Canberra Museum & Gallery

Exhibition 31 May – 31 August 2025

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

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

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

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



Photo credit: Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General.

Ms Cathy Moore AM was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia, ACT, in 2020 for her women's rights advocacy work.

50 Years of the Australian Honours System is now on display at the **Royal Australian Mint Canberra**



Exhibition 26 May 2025 – 15 Feb 2026

The Australian honours system recognises the outstanding service and contributions of Australians making a difference. To those who dedicate themselves to improving local communities, demonstrating courage and bravery, and serving in response to nationally significant emergencies.

See rare coins, medals and medallions from the National Coin Collection, including the 1879 International Exhibition Sydney Medallion and Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II 50c Silver Proof Coin. Displays from the Government House include the Cross of Valour and 80th Anniversary of Armistice Remembrance Medal.

The Governor-General was proud to launch Reflection: 50 years of the Australian honours system at the Royal Australian Mint with their Acting CEO Emily Martin and the Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP. The exhibition is the result of collaboration between the Mint and the Honours and Awards Secretariat at Government House.



"From those first awards until now, our honours system has reflected our prized Australian values of selflessness, ingenuity and discovery, commitment to service, and compassion, both in good times and times of crisis and distress.

"I am proud to congratulate the imagination, commitment and insight of all involved in the realisation of this exhibition."

The exhibition is open to the public and a special uncirculated commemorative coin, honouring the original designs by Stuart Devlin AO, is available to purchase.

Stuart Devlin AO born in Geelong in 1931 was an internationally renowned metalworker and designer. He began studying art at the Gordon Institute of Technology before obtaining a post at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology where he studied gold and silversmithing. He moved on scholarship to London in 1958 to study at the Royal College of Arts; he returned briefly to Melbourne in 1964 to teach.

After designing the Australia decimal coins, he returned to London in 1965 to open a workshop. In 1965 and 1969 he designed the Order of Australia medals, in 1982 a series of Defence Force Service Awards, and in 2000 the Sydney Olympics and Paralympics medals and coin series.

In 1980 Stuart was appointed Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's official Goldsmith and Jeweller.

1988 he was awarded an Order of Australia and Honorary Doctorate at RMIT in 2000. He was commissioned internationally for many significant metal pieces and designed the coinage for 36 nations.



Order of Australia Recipients



The Order of Australia serves as the pre-eminent award that can be bestowed upon a recipient by fellow Australians in recognition of outstanding achievements and service. The OAA VIC Branch acknowledges some diverse 2025 King's Birthday Recipients below.

Kathryn Fagg AC

Queen's Birthday 2019 Kathryn Fagg was an Officer of the Order (AO) recipient for distinguished service to business and finance, to the central banking, logistics and manufacturing sectors, and to women.

King's Birthday this year Kathryn Fagg was elevated to Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) for eminent service to business governance, to the banking, finance and investment industry, to public administration, to the not-for-profit sector, and to women.

Kathryn Fagg AC (photo right) is a South Central Suburbs Regional Group Victoria Branch member.

Kathryn started her career as an engineer and has gone on to hold a range of Executive and Board roles. She has more than 25 years of senior commercial and operational leadership experience in a range of industries.



Kathryn was appointed Chair of Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) in 2021; she served on the Board since 2018 and was Deputy Chair in 2020.

Kathryn Fagg AC is a current Non-Executive Director of the National Australia Bank; Djerriwarrh Investments and Medibank Private. Executive Mentor at Merryck & Co Australia and New Zealand, since 2016, Inaugural Chair Watertrust Australia, Board Member The Myer Foundation, Chair Breast Cancer Network Australia, Board Member Champions of Change Coalition and Grattan Institute, since 2018.

Associate Professor Charlie Corke AM

Associate Professor Charlie Corke AM was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to intensive care medicine as a clinician, administrator and researcher.

Throughout his career spanning nearly four decades at Barwon Health, Charlie served as the Director of the Intensive Care Unit from 1991 to 2008, shaping intensive care as we know it today.

Associate Professor Charlie Corke is widely acknowledged as a leading voice in end-of-life care. He was integral in the implementation of Victoria's Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) legislation and served for six years as the deputy chair of the VAD Review Board



He was a founding Board Member, and eventual President of the College of Intensive Care Medicine of Australia and New Zealand (CICM). During Charlie's tenure on the Board of CICM, he contributed to the development of education and assessment; promoted systems to create a safer environment for junior doctors; highlighted bullying and harassment in medicine; and advocated for better conditions for trainee doctors.

Over the years, Charlie has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to Australian healthcare, his community, world health issues, and our flora and fauna. His engagement with the community at multiple levels demonstrates an exemplary level of service. He has transformed the face of intensive care medicine in Australia, as well as the countless lives he has saved.

"I'm honoured to receive this recognition. Medicine is not just about treatment – it's about listening, respecting choices, and supporting people through life's most challenging moments. Throughout my career, I've been driven by a passion not only to care for patients, but to support and guide the next generation of doctors" – Associate Professor Charlie Corke AM.

Charlie is a Board Member of Conservation Ecology Centre, Cape Otway since 2005.

Charlie continues to display an unwavering optimism for the future of this country, and the people that live within it.

Publications:

Author, *Handing Over Reflections and Advice for Young Doctors*, Erudite Medical Books, 2024

Author, *Letting Go: How to Plan for a Good Death*, Scribe Publications, 2018

Curator, Documentary film, *In the End*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Photo credit: Barwon Health Associate Professor Charlie Corke AM



Karen Milward AM

Karen Milward was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for her significant service to Indigenous advocacy and reconciliation. Karen is a proud Yorta Yorta woman who was born and raised in Melbourne and has contributed much to the community.

Karen is a strong advocate for developing culturally appropriate solutions to the issues confronting First Nations people of Australia. She does this through a range of services working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities at grass roots level, as well as working at organisational and government levels, locally and nationally.

Karen's aim is to empower First Nations individuals and communities, and her work evidences her strong commitment to Reconciliation.

Working with corporate, local government and government more broadly, Karen's work history and community involvement is broad. For instance, she is part of supporting the development of the Reconciliation Action Plan for Commonwealth Games Australia.

Karen was responsible for changing how local councils work with First People and considers this a legacy piece. She has also contributed to developing support structures to address the issues around the Stolen Generation, family violence and economic development through the various roles.

Karen is the Chair of Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place. As a Fellow of the Gathering Place she was able to raise funds to establish an industrial kitchen and purchase art works to ensure a strong space for all who gather and use this important space. She is also the long-time Chair of Community First Development. She chaired Kinaway Chamber of Commerce Victoria Ltd for many years. Was Co-Chair of the Victorian Aboriginal Employment and Economic Council, and Deputy Chair Major Projects Victoria - Aboriginal Advisory Council and a lead evaluator with the DELWP Biodiversity 2037 Implementation Evaluation Panel. She was an Advisory member of Swinburne University's National Centre for Reconciliation Practice.

She is a Fellow with Leadership Victoria and member of the Alumni with the Melbourne Business School MURRA Aboriginal Business Master Class program.

In 2022 Karen was inducted into the Victorian Women's Honour Roll.

Karen is very pleased and humbled to receive the recognition, "it gives me formal recognition of all the work I have done over the years and this is quite special. I have also been moved and delighted to receive so many beautiful messages as a result of the recognition - it inspires me to continue the work I do."

Karen also reflects that the honour is shared with the "people who support me in continuing to advocate for First People, so we can reach our aspirations in being self-determining and making our own decisions for our future."



Brian Cook AM

Brian Cook AM was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to Australian Rules football, to business, and to the community.

Aussie Rules leader Brian Cook AM says his long career has been influenced by a sense of purpose and strong values.

"My purpose has been 'to do well, to do good, and to do right' in my professional and personal life," he says.

He has been CEO of three different AFL clubs over the past 36 years, starting at West Coast Eagles, then Geelong Football Club, and now at Carlton Football Club.

Outside of football, Brian has shown leadership within a number of community organisations including as Chair of Barwon Health, Patron of the Wombat's Wish program, Director of Tourism Victoria and Zoo Victoria, as a Champions of Change advisor and as an Adjunct Professor at Deakin University.

"This recognition is not only a thank you for my service, but also a reinforcement of my values-based leadership that I try to demonstrate as often as possible," he says.

"I love seeing the joy on faces of fans through Australian Rules football and sport generally, I love watching athletes grow into better athletes and citizens, watching players and staff becoming team people, and meeting good people through sport.

"I love leading organisations that continually improve. And, I love winning."

Following his own recognition, Brian emphasises the importance of acknowledging the work of others.

"There are so many wonderful people doing so many wonderful things in Australia. Often, these people go through life not being recognised. They are often the 'little people', not necessarily the appointed leader but someone in middle management or lower or a volunteer, someone others trust and respect implicitly.'

"I feel very grateful to be recognised for my service. It's a very proud moment for me, and to share with my wife Claire, children, grandchildren, work colleagues and friends."



"I want to love and thank ... all the people who I have learned from during my life."

Brian was the appointed CEO of the Geelong Cats in 1999 and enjoyed a remarkable and successful 22-year tenure, which included finals football in 16 of his 18 seasons and Premierships in 2007, 2009 and 2011. He was also instrumental in the redevelopment of GMHBA Stadium.

Photo credit Geelong Cats: L-R Colin Carter AM and Brian Cook AM at the MCG.

Some content of this article is from The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia website.

Maureen Davey OAM

Maureen Davey OAM was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Maureen has dedicated her life to advocacy, quiet leadership and community service. She was born deaf and with legal blindness and these aspects of her identity have never defined her.

Maureen has volunteered at the Vinnies Shop in Alfredton for over 30 years and she can usually be found each week carefully ironing donated clothing to help prepare items for sale. Her dedication earned her a St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria's Service Award in both 2013 and 2018.

In 1967, she helped found the Ballarat and District Better Hearing Australia and later served as President from 2005 to 2007. She was also a founding member of the Ballarat Deaf Social Club in 1974. Maureen holds life memberships with both organisations, recognising her decades of contribution.



That same year, she helped establish the Ballarat Branch of the Association for the Blind (now Vision Australia), serving for many years as both a committee member and chairperson.

Maureen's life has been one of service, grounded in compassion, community and courage.

Photo credit: Lachlan Bence/The Courier

2025 National Conference in Sydney

An overview of the national conference from some OAA Victoria Branch members:



This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Australian Honours and Awards system, which includes the Order of Australia, the Australian Bravery Decorations and the National Medal.

Bowerhaus in NSW was proud to commemorate this milestone event via producing the celebratory in on the right on the occasion of The Order of Australia Association National Conference in Sydney May 2025.

Each national conference delegate received the commemorative in in their conference bag.

Thank you Bowerhaus

2025 National Conference in Sydney continued

Words from **Diane Wright OAM**

Exceptional, with highlights including:

The Welcome Reception at Government House Sydney
Soprano, Clarissa Spata's rendition of our National Anthem



The Oration by The Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK KC (Mil) CVO MC (Retd), who said "What shapes our lives shapes our values – with traits such as positivity, compassion, kindness, generosity, resilience"

Our excellent MC Adjunct Professor Sophie Scott OAM

The operatic performance by Clarissa Spata & Gaetano Bonfante

Choral Evensong at St James Church of Sydney commemorating 50 Years of The Order of Australia – with the new Dobson organ.

The Gala Dinner with the Presentation of the Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholarships: hearing from five inspiring young recipients including Ayman Miazzi from Victoria who is undertaking a Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) at Monash University, specialising in Aerospace Engineering. Congratulations Ayman.

The Royal Australian Navy Memorial Service and Luncheon on HMAS Adelaide

Outstanding Keynote Speakers, including our initial speaker Dr Jordan Nguyen who firstly brought his father Professor Hung Nguyen AM onto the stage. Internationally renowned, Jordan is a gracious and gifted Australian Engineer, inventor and innovator, developing Intelligence Design and Biomedical instrumentation and making a difference in the lives of the ageing and those with disabilities. This includes using an eye tracker based on eye recognition for people with Cerebral Palsy and Motor Neurone Disease, resulting in eye controlled mobility enabling personal potential and connection.

Dr John Gullotta AM and Martha Jabour OAM with the NSW Committee delivered a stellar conference.

Words from **Pam Robinson AM**

Congratulations to the NSW Branch and Conference Committee of the 37th OAA National Conference.

Delegates enjoyed an excellent program and outstanding speakers. Dr Jordan Nguyen an absolute stand-out with his 'world changing content on the intersection between technology and humanity' presentation.

Also, throughout the four days, the 50th Anniversary of the Australian Honours System was acknowledged with some very special and memorable events.

Friday Evening. Musical Guests Gaetano Bonfante – Tenor and Clarissa Spata – Soprano had us all feeling we were at either the Opera House or Musical Theatre, as they entertained us for



2025 National Conference in Sydney continued

over an hour.

This was the evening when the 50th Anniversary Cake a Mille-Feuille) (Photo below) was cut by MAJGEN Barry Nunn OAA National Chairman, Hon Vicki O'Halloran AO CVO National President and Dr John Gullotta AM Chairman NSW Branch and Conference Convenor.



Saturday afternoon. We had the opportunity to attend St. James' Church, Sydney's oldest Church building still in use, where a Choral Evensong was held commemorating the 50 years of the Order of Australia. The full Clergy attended and welcomed us, and we were treated to beautiful music from the newly installed Organ and the talented Choir.

Sunday's Remembrance Service and wreath laying at Garden Island was poignant and was followed by boarding the HMAS Adelaide where over two hours we enjoyed lunchtime refreshments and had the wonderful opportunity to explore the huge ship that was specifically designed to carry troops, vehicles, and helicopters.

Australia Post Commemorative 50th Anniversary First Day issue envelope was in each Conference bag.



2025 National Conference in Sydney continued

Words from **Milly Parker OAM**

Reflections on a Memorable Evening at Government House

Attending the Order of Australia Association National Conference in Sydney was an experience of immense pride and gratitude.

A highlight was the evening reception at Government House, beginning with a moving Welcome to Country by Uncle Allen Madden, a respected Gadigal Elder of the Eora Nation. This was followed by a gracious address from Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New South Wales.

As a history enthusiast, I was captivated by the Gothic Revival splendor of Government House. Completed in 1845, its castle-like turrets and battlements felt like stepping into another era. Designed by Edward Blore—who also contributed to Buckingham Palace—and adapted by Mortimer Lewis using local materials, its atmosphere was strikingly different from Melbourne's Italianate Government House.

Inside, crystal chandeliers sparkled, silverware gleamed, and every detail reflected tradition and care. I spoke with staff who clearly take pride in their work. One gentleman, with evident delight, produced a ruler to demonstrate how each place setting is precisely measured—45 centimeters per guest, every utensil perfectly aligned.

The Royal Australian Navy Band brought energy and ceremonial grandeur, enhancing the spirit of celebration. Conversations flowed warmly among remarkable fellow members, with a strong sense of shared purpose and respect.

My heartfelt thanks to MAJGEN Barry Nunn AO, National Chairman of the Order of Australia Association, Dr John Gullotta AM NSW Branch Chair and the NSW Committee for a truly memorable and uplifting event—one that honoured our shared traditions and left lasting impressions.



Photo left: Milly Parker OAM (VIC Branch) and Patricia Hadley OAM (NSW Branch)



Photo above: Government House NSW

2025 National Conference in Sydney continued

Words from **Grahame Leonard AM**

A highlight from the Gala Dinner

My wife Ruth and I enjoyed being part of the 330 strong attendees at our 37th National Conference Sydney held at the heritage listed Sofitel Wentworth Hotel in Sydney over May 1-4 this year.

The Gala Dinner was a highlight. The key address was given by her Excellency The Hon. Margaret Beazley AC KC Governor of New South Wales.

The theme was Celebrate/Motivate/Nominate: "Inspiring Australian Achievers" and the activities supported this theme.

As is our tradition this year's Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholarship Awardees were announced and introduced by Foundation President Dr Helen Nugent AC. Included in this year's five Awardees was Ayman Miazhi who with his parents migrated from Bangladesh. We had the pleasure of hosting the family at our table.



Our Victorian Branch is the donor of Ayman's scholarship. Ayman (photo left) is undertaking a Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) at Monash University with a specialisation in Aerospace Engineering. He has an impeccable academic record including achieving straight high distinctions. He pursues an enthusiastic involvement in university activities including as a member of the Monash High Powered Rocketry Dynamics Subteam where he is tasked with the simulations of the rockets that his team creates.

Post-graduation, Ayman wants to undertake a Doctor of Philosophy at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston. However, his bigger and more audacious goal is to start a successful company that develops reusable rocket systems for interplanetary missions.

In addition to the \$45,000 Ayman's scholarship includes being mentored by Professor Alexander Smith AO, an Australian American engineer and academic who is the Eugene Higgins Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, Emeritus at Princeton University.

Ayman is looking forward to addressing the OAA Victoria Branch End of Year Dinner on Thursday 20 November 2025 at the Stamford Plaza Melbourne.

The Order of Australia Association Scholarship

The Association is an incorporated body of recipients in the Order of Australia. The Association needs to be robust, flexible and responsive to the members' needs and to serve as a model for community engagement.

By donating to the Foundation Scholarship, Association members promote Australian citizenship and thereby help the Association achieve its purpose.

Donations may be made to:

Name of Account: The Order of Australia Association Foundation Ltd Gift Account

BSB No: 013006 **Account No:** 314735771

Please advise details of EFT transfers to: sec@oaafoundation.com.au

Donations through the Foundation attract DGR tax deductibility.



Members making a difference in the community

Vivienne Nguyen AM



Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) Chair, Vivienne Nguyen AM, has been honoured recently at the Centenary Celebration of the Faculty of Business and Economics at the University of Melbourne.

Vivienne was recognised alongside other distinguished alumni in an impressive photographic display, showcasing the transformative power of education and the impact of the faculty's community.

Vivienne's dedication and leadership at VMC have been truly inspiring, and this recognition is a testament to her outstanding contributions.

In 2021 Vivienne Nguyen was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to the multicultural community of Victoria.

Other OAA VIC Branch members honoured at the Centenary Celebration include Sally Capp AO who was the 104th Lord Mayor of Melbourne and Hugh Morgan AC who has had a diverse career spanning the mining industry, equities, and various leadership roles.

Vivienne Nguyen AM is a Western Suburbs Regional Group Victoria Branch member.

Bulent (Hass) Dellal AO



In 2015, Bulent (Hass) Dellal was awarded an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for distinguished service to the multicultural community through leadership and advisory roles, to the advancement of inclusiveness and social harmony, to youth, and to the broadcast media

Hass is the executive director of the Australian Multicultural Foundation, an organisation established in 1989 to promote a strong commitment to Australia as one people drawn from many cultures. He is the former chair of SBS Television and Radio.

Hass has more than 30 years' experience in multicultural affairs and serves on a number of committees and boards, including chair of the Centre for Multicultural Youth, chair of the Islamic Museum of Australia, is co-chair of the Victoria Police multifaith council and is a fellow of the Williamson Leadership Program.

Recently Hass was appointed to the Australian National Maritime Museum (ANMM) Board. The role of the Board is to interpret, preserve and promote Australia's maritime heritage and culture. It fulfils this by undertaking research, acquisitions, managing its collections and heritage vessels and providing access through public programs and exhibitions.

Bulent Dellal AO is a Melbourne Central Regional Group Victoria Branch member.

Cathy Roth OAM

"My Dementia Companion" is a simple phone app to support those caring for someone with dementia.

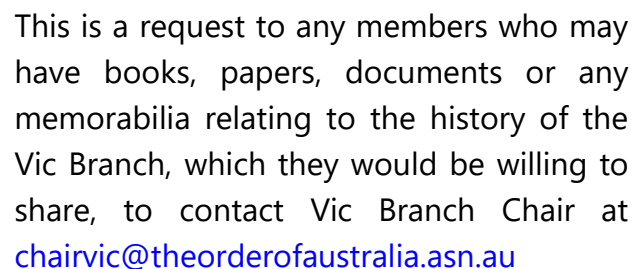
Incredibly user-friendly and easy to use, it's simple "where to next" covers the whole dementia journey.

In 2013 Cathy Roth was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to the community of Geelong.



History of Victoria Branch

In the lead up to the 50th Anniversary the National Board will be establishing a working group to collate historical data relating to the Association.





16th – 19th April 2026

Rydges South Bank Hotel & Conference Venue
South Brisbane

April is a great time to enjoy a Brisbane Autumn at the fabulous South Bank

2026 ORATION



Major General Emeritus
Professor John Pearn AO,
AM, GCStJ, RFD – globally
renowned scientist,
philosopher, orator and
widely published author

KEYNOTE PRESENTERS



Dr Dimity Dornan AO,
Hearing health specialist and
bionics advocate, 2018 Qld
Senior Australian of the
Year.



Michael Rayner AM,
BArch (Hons1) (UNSW),
LFRAIA, FTSE, RIBA,
BOAQ, NSWARB-
*architect, urban
designer and futurist.*



Tour UQ Campus Art



Service at Anzac Square



Stroll through South Bank

BOOKING DETAILS OUT SOON

HELP NEEDED Storage of Vic Branch items

Vic Branch has a range of items used at various functions including.

- a fold down banner (carry bag is approx 150mm diameter and 1meter long)
- three flags (two carry bags are approx 150mm diameter and 1meter long)
- a flag base (carry bag approx. 300mm by 300mm)
- medal board (900mm by 900mm)
- an easel (approx. 2m high)



Current storage arrangements are no longer available, and the Vic Branch is looking for alternative storage arrangements.

This is a call out to any member who has an appropriate storage area for the items listed above, who would be willing to assist us or even suggest a space, which could be used for storage? If so, please contact Vic Branch chair at chairvic@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

OAA VIC Branch Regional Group Chairs

Barwon	Wayne Myers OAM
Central Highlands Wimmera	John Burt OAM
Eastern Suburbs	Geoffrey Grinton OAM
Frankston Mornington Peninsula	Heather Barton AM
Gippsland	Doug Caulfield OAM RFD
Loddon-Campaspe	Alex Stoneman OAM
Mallee	VIC Branch committee
Melbourne Central	Trevor Clark OAM
North Central Suburbs	Fred Harrington OAM
NE & Goulburn Valley	Mary-Lou Davis OAM
South Central Suburbs	Felicity Frederico OAM
South West Vic	Georgina Gubbins OAM
Western Suburbs	June Kane AM



Nominate someone for the Order of Australia

Anyone can nominate someone to be recognised through the Order of Australia. Nominations can be submitted at any time during the year.

To nominate go to the [online portal](#)

Before beginning you will need to gather some key information:

- *The contact details of the person you are nominating
 - *A short case of why/who you are nominating; including
 - Examples of how they have demonstrated outstanding qualities
 - What they have done to make things better for others
 - The role(s) or area(s) in which they have excelled
 - The period of time, or dates of service (if known)
 - Evidence of other awards or recognition received by the nominee
 - *Up to four referees (including contact details)
-



Did You Know?

