



# The Order of Australia Association

## NSW Branch Newsletter

### April-August 2025

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

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



## From your NSW Chair

### John Gullotta AM

Dear NSW Members,

We are still recovering from the Sydney National Conference in May! 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 the Sydney National Conference to come to fruition. In the words of our National Chair, MAJGEN Barry Nunn AO, "It was truly magnificent!"

The excellent line up of speakers were of the highest calibre and certainly captured the true essence 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.



Photo: Conference Delegates on the flight deck of HMAS Adelaide in an "Australia" formation - Carlos Velasco Photography



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We now pass the baton onto Ronda Nix OAM and her Committee and look forward to a successful National Conference in Brisbane in April 2026.

On behalf of the NSW Branch I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to Kathy Wooldridge OAM (Queensland) for her outstanding service as National Membership Director and also for her help during the National Conference. Her dedication to the Association over many years has been strong and invaluable and she will be truly missed. We welcome Dot Haynes OAM (Victoria) as the new National Membership Director.

The NSW Branch held its AGM on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at the Castlereagh Boutique Hotel. My thanks to outgoing Committee Member Harold Sharp OAM and a warm 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 team!

Post Sydney Conference now our NSW Branch work continues, including arranging meetings in our major regional hubs. It is my aim as NSW Chair to visit as many Regional group as I can. We are also in the process of arranging no cost member forums to enable events to be affordable and accessible to all our members.

The 2025 King's Birthday Investitures will be held in September and the Committee looks forward to attending the Investiture ceremonies at Government House Sydney to represent and promote our Association.

This year we are holding a combined luncheon for both Australia Day 2025 and King's Birthday 2025 New Recipients and their guests at NSW Parliament House on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025 the NSW Branch celebrated 45 years and we will arrange a special celebration to commemorate this in conjunction with our Christmas event.

I look forward to seeing you all and meeting new members at our upcoming events.

Kind regards

*John*

**Dr John Gullotta AM**

NSW Chair

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## From your NSW National Director David North OAM

Following the recent nomination and interview process for the position of National Membership Director, we warmly welcome Dot Haynes OAM (Victoria) to the role. Dot brings a wealth of experience and dedication, and we look forward to her leadership.

The NSW Branch extends its sincere thanks and appreciation to Kath Wooldridge OAM (Queensland) for her outstanding service as National Membership Director. Her support, encouragement, and guidance have been invaluable to the Association. We offer heartfelt thanks to Kath Wooldridge OAM for her exceptional contribution during her term as National Membership Director. Her generosity, professionalism, and positive spirit have left a lasting impact. Her welcoming nature and tireless efforts have been widely acknowledged by members.

The OAA Foundation, the Association's charitable arm, continues to report healthy growth in its investment portfolio and has recently received several significant new donations.

We encourage all members to participate in the current national member survey, which is open until Monday, 25 August 2025. This is a valuable opportunity for members to provide feedback on a range of topics that will guide both national strategy and branch-level planning. The survey, led by Phil Morrall AM, was distributed via email on Monday, 4 August 2025 using Survey Monkey. Responses are anonymous, and results will be shared later this year.

Survey Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2RV2YWY>

The Board Strategy Committee is currently working on updating the Association's strategic plan to ensure we continue meeting members' evolving needs.

To align with ATO regulatory requirements, a paper has been developed to support the consolidation of regional bank accounts into a single NSW Branch account, managed on behalf of the regions. This process preserves the integrity and independence of each region while improving financial compliance and oversight.

The next National Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, 22 August 2025. Members are invited to submit any matters they would like raised at the meeting by contacting the NSW Branch.

### **Looking Ahead: National Conference 2026 – Brisbane**

The 2026 National Conference will be held in Brisbane from 16–19 April 2026 at the Rydges South Bank Hotel. The Conference theme will be "Bridge to the Future", and further information will be available on the Queensland Branch page of the national website at:

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

(Click on "Home" and then select "Click here for more information" under the National Conference section.)

### **Membership Trends**

Recent data confirms that in both 2024 and 2025, approximately 40% of membership applications were received via mail and 60% online. In addition, around 40% of new Order of Australia award recipients choose to join the Association, reflecting steady engagement from the newest members of the Order.

Kind regards

*David*

### **David North OAM**

NSW Branch Nominated Director

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

# New Members

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

**Mr John Christopher Bennett OAM**  
**Mr Lance Elwyn Harrigan OAM**  
**Sister Carmel Elizabeth Moore OAM**  
**Mr Vidyasagaran Haran Ramachandran OAM**  
**Dr John Patrick Pace AO**  
**Dr John Patrick Drinan AM**  
**Mrs Colleen Patricia Keys OAM**  
**Mr Cameron William Brownjohn OAM**  
**Mr Ray Vincent Petersen OAM**  
**Ms Melissa Yeung OAM**  
**Mrs Catherine Wilson OAM**  
**Mr Daryl Raymond Wilson OAM**  
**Mr Michael Fredrick Morris OAM**  
**Mr Elie Akouri OAM**  
**Mrs Jo-ann Morris OAM**  
**Dr Henry Lee Gardiner AM**  
**Mrs Dorothy Joan Crabb OAM**  
**Mr David Henry Pigott OAM**  
**Dr Gregory Henry Levenston OAM**  
**Mr Edward (Ted) Lionel Gillroy OAM**  
**The Hon Jillian G Skinner AM**  
**Ms Yan Ling Monika Tu OAM**  
**Em Professor Philip Newall AM**  
**Mr Allan Kevin Staples OAM**  
**Ms Millie Ingram AM**  
**Mr Richard Lawrence Penn AM**  
**Mr Juris Turmanis OAM**  
**Mr Dennis Michael Perry OAM**  
**Mr Bruce Gordon AO**  
**Ms Karen Moses OAM**  
**Dr John Dennis Vinen OAM**  
**Mr Leslie Angus Peterkin OAM**  
**Mrs Karen Elizabeth McKay OAM**  
**Dr James Maurice Branley AM**  
**Mr Garth Nix OAM**

# New Members - Continued

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

**Mr David Hugh Armstrong AM**  
**Mrs Joanne Cooper OAM**  
**Ms Carol Ann Duncan OAM**  
**Dr Michael David Steiner AM**  
**Mr Andrew Douglas Warden AM**  
**Mr Ronald Bruce York OAM**  
**Mr Anthony John Surtees AM**  
**Mr Mark Kevin Holton OAM**  
**Mr Stephen James Handley OAM**  
**Ms Sharon Williams OAM**  
**Mr Ian Roderick Macintosh AM**  
**Ms Rosalie Anne Boylan OAM**  
**Mrs Anna Louise Barwick OAM**  
**Ms Julie Charlton OAM**  
**Mr Barrie Leonard Littlefield OAM**  
**Dr Karen Jean Douglas-Make OAM**  
**Professor Sharon Linda Naismith AM**  
**Dr Joseph Bartolo Casamento OAM**  
**Mr Richard L Perin AM**  
**CPO Steven E Atkins OAM**  
**Dr Gregory P Smith OAM**  
**Ms Wendy E McCarthy AC**  
**Mrs Margaret P Middleton OAM**  
**Mrs Evelyn Jean McDonald OAM**  
**Mr Salim (Paul) Moussa OAM**  
**Mr Kenneth John McCracken OAM**  
**Mr Wilson Keith McNeil OAM**  
**Mr Gerald Francis McCarthy OAM**  
**Ms Anne Veronica Gorman OAM**  
**Mrs Anita Beryl Arnold OAM**  
**Dr Gregory Peel Smith OAM**  
**Professor Gerald Blaise Fogarty OAM**  
**Ms Catherine Louise Johnson AM**  
**Mr Richard James Turner OAM**  
**Mrs Ruth Robyn Blakely OAM**  
**Mr Dean Charles Gardiner OAM**

## Upcoming NSW Branch Events

- **September 8 - 11<sup>th</sup> 2025**- King's Birthday 2025 Investitures at Government House Sydney.
- **19<sup>th</sup> September 2025**- Australia Day 25 and King's Birthday 25 New Recipients Combined Luncheon at NSW Parliament House.
- **Date TBC** - OAA NSW 45yr Birthday Celebration and Christmas Event.
- **26<sup>th</sup> January 2026** - Australia Day Cruise Luncheon - Aboard MV Captain Cook III

## Order of Australia Merchandise

To see the range of OAA Merchandise available for purchase please click on the link

### [OAA MERCHANDISE SHOP](#)

A tip to save on postage and handling is for regional groups to place a “group order” to reduce and spread the postage and handling costs. Multiple items will be put in one postage pack where possible.

### OAA Merchandise is available for all to purchase

Enjoy a scarf, tie or cufflinks

|   |                                      |   |   |                                      |  |                    |   |                             |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------|---|-----------------------------|
|  | Blue<br>Knit scarf<br><b>\$26.00</b> |  |  | Blue<br>Silk scarf<br><b>\$52.00</b> |  | Tie <b>\$30.00</b> |  | Cufflinks<br><b>\$35.00</b> |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------|---|-----------------------------|

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



# OAA NSW Archibald Exhibition - Private Tour

Report by Dianne North OAM

On Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> May, a group of 60 OAA members, family and friends gathered at the Art Gallery of NSW for a private tour of the Archibald Exhibition. We were fortunate to be given access to the Art Gallery early in the morning before it was open to the public. This allowed us to view the art works without the crowds.

On arrival we were greeted by Gwen Bourgon-Gauvin, the Tours and Administration Officer at the Art Gallery of NSW. Gwen introduced us to our guides, Ann and Annabel who are two of the most experienced guides at the Art Gallery. We were all handed earphones to make it easier for everyone in each group to hear what was being said by the tour guide.

Nobody was disappointed with our tour. We were treated to interesting examples from each of the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Exhibitions. We were given delightful background stories to each of these which helped to make this such an amazing experience.

Our tour lasted just over an hour, after which we could wander and look at the entire exhibitions. Many of the group then stayed for a catchup over coffee in the Art Gallery Café.

Many attendees stayed to view the Young Archies exhibition, at their leisure. The talent displayed by those young artists chosen for the exhibit was very impressive. There are certainly some artists there to watch out for in future years.

This event is proving to be one of our most popular. It sold out in one day. We will definitely be organising another tour next year.

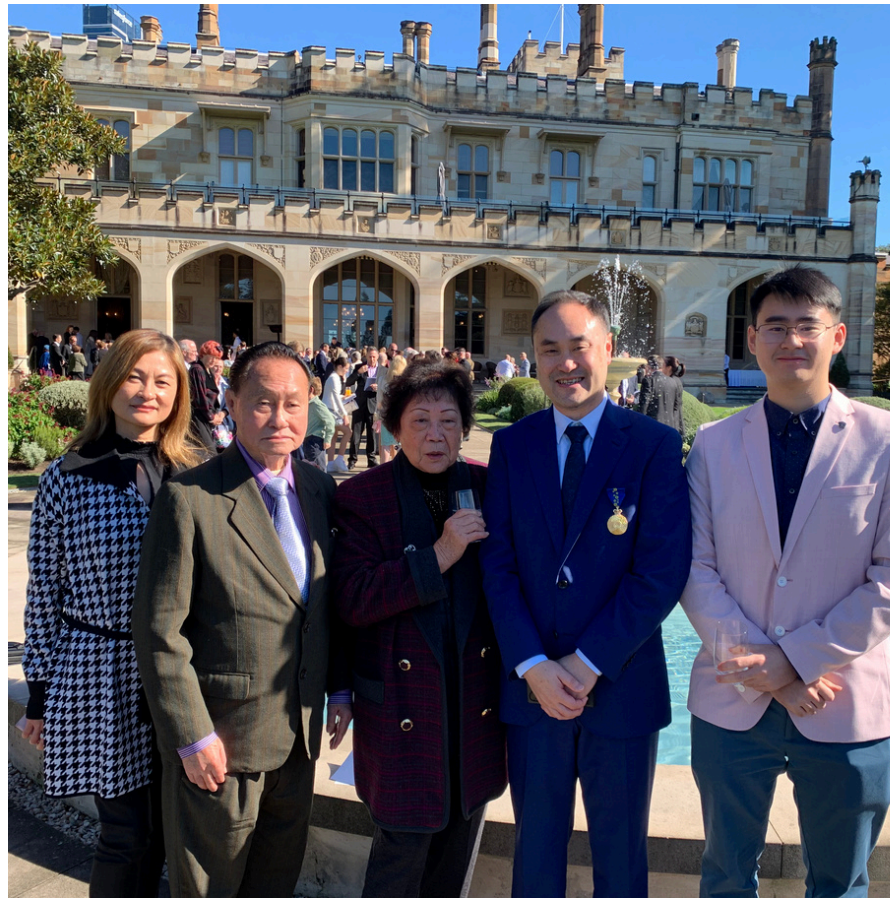




# Australia Day 25 Investiture Ceremonies Government House Sydney - May 2025









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

### The King's Birthday 2025 Honours

At the King's Birthday Order of Australia Awards on 2 June 2025, a total of **581 Australians** were recognised in the General Division of the Order of Australia. These honours included:

- **14 Companions (AC)**
- **31 Officers (AO)**
- **123 Members (AM)**
- **413 Medals (OAM)**

From New South Wales, 238 recipients were recognised in the 2025 Honours List. The distribution across the four award levels in NSW closely reflects the national proportion, showcasing the outstanding achievements of individuals across a wide range of fields in our state.

### National Directive: Centralisation of Banking Accounts

Under the guidance of the National Board, the NSW Branch is implementing a strategic initiative to consolidate all existing regional banking accounts into a single, centralised NSW Branch account.

This move has been carefully planned to enhance efficiency, compliance, and financial transparency—without compromising regional autonomy.

Key Benefits of Consolidation:

1. Improved Financial Oversight
2. A unified banking structure will strengthen transparency, simplify reporting, and enhance governance, helping ensure full compliance with regulatory requirements.
3. Reduced Administrative Burden
4. Centralisation streamlines reconciliations, audits, and reporting—freeing up regional committees to focus on local events and member engagement.
5. Cost Efficiency
6. Consolidating accounts will help reduce banking fees and service charges, allowing more resources to be directed to our programs and community initiatives.
7. Enhanced Security and Risk Management
8. A central account framework enables stronger internal controls and fraud prevention measures, offering greater protection for all funds.
9. Preservation of Regional Autonomy
10. Most importantly, each region retains full control over its own funds. Regional committees will continue to manage their local budgets, spending, and priorities. This is purely an administrative change, not an operational one.

We believe this transition will strengthen our financial foundations and support our collective mission across NSW. In the coming months, our NSW Branch Treasurer, Louise Paisley OAM will provide further information, timelines, and opportunities for regional input and feedback.

## **Staying Connected: Your Key Resources**

**The Order of Australia Association website is your go-to platform for:**

- The NSW events calendar
- Regional contact details
- Membership resources, brochures, and application forms
- Updates on the 2026 National Conference in Brisbane
- Notices of upcoming regional and state-wide events
- Merchandise purchase. (New items cooler bag and spray jacket)
- Please visit regularly to stay informed and involved.
- Regional Events and Visits

A sincere thank you to our regional convenors and secretaries for including the NSW Branch Committee in your invitations. Where possible, members of the Branch Committee are eager to attend regional events and engage with local members.

New South Wales is a large and diverse state, but through the efforts of our volunteers and members, the Order of Australia Association continues to bring people and communities together.

### **The Role of Your Branch Coordinator**

As Branch Regional Group Coordinator, I am here to support all regions in:

- Member engagement and communication
- Event coordination (Website calendar)
- Public and community relations
- Member support
- Reporting and liaison
- Administrative responsibilities

A key part of this role is to serve as the primary point of contact between the NSW Branch Committee and regional members—ensuring you are informed about national and branch activities and encouraging widespread participation in events across NSW.

Please feel free to reach out if I can assist you in any way.

Kind regards

*David*

### **David North OAM**

NSW Regional Group Coordinator

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

# AROUND THE REGIONS

## OAA Hunter Regional Group Morning Tea - 24<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Report by Dianne North OAM

On Tuesday morning, 24<sup>th</sup> June, 26 Hunter Region members gathered at the Port Stephens Aged and Veteran's Care Facility, Harbourside Haven at Shoal Bay for a morning tea to honour the region's recipients of the King's Birthday honours. We were treated to a large selection of scones, sandwiches and cakes.

Ian Lovell APM, the local co-ordinator of the group, was standing in for Convenor Emeritus Professor Dr Maree Gleeson OAM, who is currently having a fabulous time travelling in Tuscany. Ian warmly welcomed everyone and introduced the guests, including OAA NSW Branch Regional Co-Ordinator David North OAM and his wife, Dianne North OAM, the Honorary Secretary of the NSW Branch, guest speaker Ruth Wilson OAM and the CEO of Port Stephens Aged and Veteran's Care, Paul Fitzpatrick. The unstoppable Val Harvey-Hamilton led the singing of the National Anthem. Val is in her 90s and always does an amazing job!

The names and citations of the recipients were read out.

An Australian Day recipient was Wing Commander Cameron Murray Douglas who received an AM for exceptional service delivering advanced integrated air and missile defence capability for the Australian Defence Force and the United States Air Force.

The King's Birthday awardees:

Warrant Officer Robert James Steedman AM (Military Division) for exceptional service as a Combat Controller in the Royal Australian Air Force.

Mr Leslie Angus Peterkin OAM for service to the creative arts.

Mr David Edward Allan Sams OAM for service to the community of Port Stephens.

David North was asked to address the meeting on things happening at state level and, because David is also an OAA National Director was able to give information at National level.

The guest speaker, Ruth Wilson OAM, world famous aviator, spoke about some of her experiences. Ruth received her OAM at King's Birthday 2024 for her services to air ballooning which she has been doing for 50 years and in that time has experienced many ordeals and has written many books about them, the most notable being "Conquering Clouds".

Ruth told us how one day when out fishing for marlin, the boat was hit by a giant wave and broke in two. She nearly lost her life but was saved by her own inner strength and a dolphin. She sustained head and back injuries.

Ruth then told us about her participation in the Gordon Bennett Gas Balloon Race taking off from Bern, Switzerland. They use hydrogen gas, whereas in Australia we only have hot air ballooning. Ruth told us of the difficulties experienced going over the Dolomites, a mountain range in Italy, and also flying over a NATO base in Italy and the difficulties in getting permission to have an emergency landing there.

This certainly ended the meeting on a high note along with an invitation to attend their next function in Swansea on 2<sup>nd</sup> August.



# OAA Central West Regional Group Luncheon - 5<sup>th</sup> July 2025

## Report by Dianne North OAM

Convenor of the OAA Central West Region, Mary Brell OAM, organised a wonderful luncheon to congratulate the region's recent King's Birthday awardees. Two of the region's awardees, husband and wife team, Darryl Wilson OAM and Catherine Wilson OAM travelled from Lithgow for the occasion. They received their OAMs for their service to the Emergency Services.

The setting for the luncheon was the magnificent, historic home, Duntryleague, which is now the clubhouse for the local golf club. Convenor Mary Brell OAM welcomed everyone to the function. At the Member's Forum at the National Conference in Sydney, Mary stated that rural areas would like more support from the Branch so, due to that request, Vice Chair Martha Jabour OAM, Treasurer Louise Paisley OAM, Membership Director The Rev. Dr Geoffrey Glassock AM, Regional Co-Ordinator and National Board Member David North OAM and Secretary Dianne North OAM all travelled to Orange for the occasion.

Convenor Mary opened the function with a warm welcome to everyone. She then gave a report on the National Conference in Sydney, and what a fantastic time she had attending it. OAA NSW Regional Co-Ordinator, David North OAM, addressed the gathering telling all the exciting things happening at State and National levels of the Association. He also stressed the importance and benefits of membership of the Association. This created a lot of interest and questions about membership so OAA NSW Membership Director The Rev. Dr Geoffrey Glassock AM was asked to say a few words on how to join the Association.

It was an honour to have blind Paralympian Sue-Ellen Lovett OAM, and her husband Matt travel from Mudgee for the luncheon. Mary interviewed Sue-Ellen about her life, her amazing fundraising feats of long-distance horse rides such as from Sydney to Melbourne, the books she has written and her latest venture of writing a film script. Sue-Ellen generously donated two of her books, "The Blind Chick" as prizes in Mary's quiz.

The very special guest speaker was NSW Local Hero 2025, Martha Jabour OAM who told us of her heart wrenching story of dealing with her son's cot death and how over several years that led her to form the Homicide Victim's Support Network and then to building Grace's Place at Doonside. This is a place where victims of crime can go to receive the support, they need at such a devastating time in their lives. Grace's Place is named after Grace Lynch, the mother of Anita Cobby who was murdered so tragically. Grace and Gary Lynch worked with Martha in setting up the Homicide Victim's Support Network. Theirs was tragic story that ended up helping many other people. Grace's Place provides accommodation, food, clothing, counselling, anything that someone who is a victim of crime could need. This may be from emergency accommodation for domestic violence victims such as children whose mother has been murdered by their father, with no relatives available. Many families from the Bondi massacre also sought support at Grace's Place. It is a terrible blight on our society that there is need for such a facility, but these sorts of crime will never go away.

There were thirty people who attended this luncheon, some travelling many hours to get there, as the Central West Region is very large. Due to the amazing success of this luncheon, Convenor Mary is sure to be organising many more. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet up with so many likeminded people.



Convenor Mary Brell OAM and  
Sue-Ellen Lovett OAM  
"In Conversation"



Guest Speaker and  
NSW Branch Deputy Chair  
Martha Jabour OAM with  
Convenor Mary Brell OAM.



New awardees, Catherine Wilson OAM and Darryl Wilson OAM  
with the Convenor Mary Brell OAM.

# In Memoriam

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



## ***“Forever in our hearts”***



**Mr Hugh Calmar McCrindle OAM**

**Mr Robert W. Regnis OAM**

**Dr Joan Croll AO**

**Ms Penelope Morris AM**

**Mr Colin Francis Platt OAM**

**Mrs Jacqueline Irene Hyde OAM**

**Dr Guy Wilkie Warren AM**

**Mr Hank Christiaan Laan AM**

**Mr John Leslie Nelson OAM**

**Mr Geoffrey Lewis Basser OAM**

**Mrs Patricia June Brien OAM**

**Prof Elizabeth Anne Webby AM**

**Mr Robert James Aitken AM**

**RevF Kevin Francis Bates OAM**

**Mrs Ruby Riach OAM,FACE**

**Prof Creswell J Eastman AO**

**Mrs Frances Crampton AM**

**LTCOL Eric Alexander Richardson (Rtd) OAM**

**Mrs Beverlee Jill Louisa Adams AM**

**Mrs Noreida Joy Fotheringham OAM**

**Dr H Lindsay Thompson AM**

**Dr Brian Keith G Morton AM**

**Mr Col Joye AM**

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

*Thank you for reading!*