



# The Order of Australia Association

## NSW Branch Newsletter

### November 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,

It's been a very busy time for the NSW Branch.

We attended the King's Birthday 2025 Investitures at Government House Sydney. It was heart-warming and very moving to see awardees from all walks of life in a myriad of diversity and different professions, being acknowledged for many decades of hard work serving our community. The citations were a testament of their dedication in promoting Australian Citizenship in all fields. On behalf of the NSW Branch Committee, I would like to congratulate all new KB25 awardees and I hope you join the Association and become involved in our events and activities.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2025 we held our Annual Youth Community Service Awards Presentation Ceremony at Government House Sydney. Our Patron and NSW Governor, Her Excellency Margaret Beazley AC KC, hosted the awards and acknowledged the contribution of 25 NSW High School Children and presented them with a special certificate and trophy. Our special thanks go to our Convenor, Dr Frank Kelleher OAM for successfully organising and guiding these awards over the past nine years. The NSW Branch is committed to promoting and recognising the inspirational achievements and exceptional community service of our youth and will continue to hold these awards annually under the guidance of Dr Gary Smith AM, the new Convenor.



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This year we held a combined luncheon for both Australia Day 2025 and Kings Birthday 2025 New Recipients at NSW Parliament House on Friday 19th September 2025 with 150 attendees. This was a great opportunity for our new recipients to celebrate with their guests and family and meet fellow new recipients with great networking and camaraderie! A full report will be in the December Newsletter.

On the 26th October 2025 we held a special Art and Opera event in conjunction with the Paddington Art Prize. My thanks to Marlene Antico OAM, Founder of the Paddington Art Prize for her support and generosity. A full report will be in the December Newsletter.

It is pleasing to see that our membership is slowly increasing. There has been increased diversity in our new recipients as well as a close match now in gender. It is pleasing that our Governor General has recently streamlined the nominations process which should shorten the time from nomination to award and hopefully decrease the amount of posthumous awards given to family members which is very sad to witness.

Several of our regional groups have been very active in arranging local functions which are generally well attended. For groups that need some extra help we will be arranging meetings in our major regional hubs to assist them, as it is my aim as NSW Chair to visit as many regional groups as I can. My thanks to Regional Group Coordinator, David North OAM for his tireless work and dedication.

The no cost member forums to enable some events to be affordable and accessible to all our members should be launched in 2026.

On the 22nd July 2025 the NSW Branch celebrated 45 years and we have arranged a special celebratory Long Lunch on the 6th December 2025 to commemorate this milestone in conjunction with our Christmas event. See page 5 and book now for this memorable event.

Our Australia Day Harbour Cruise Luncheon will be going ahead on the 26th January 2026. This is a very popular event so please book your tickets now! See Page 6.

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

Kind regards

*John*

**Dr John Gullotta AM**

NSW Chair

Email: [chairnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au](mailto:chairnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au) | Mobile: 0418 233 069



## From your NSW National Director David North OAM

**The 2026 Brisbane National Conference** will be held at the Rydges South Bank Hotel in Brisbane from 16 to 19 April 2026, with the theme A Bridge to the Future. Hotel bookings are now open, and Rydges South Bank is offering special conference rates that can be confirmed instantly online. To secure accommodation, select “Book Now,” choose your preferred dates, and enter the number of rooms and guests. Conference registrations and the full program will be released shortly. Please monitor the Order of Australia Association website for updates.

### **Post- Sydney 2025 National Conference Survey Summary and Conclusion**

The 2025 Order of Australia Association National Conference in Sydney received exceptionally strong feedback, achieving an overall satisfaction rating of 4.81/5 and being widely regarded by attendees as one of the most memorable and impactful conferences to date. Participants praised the high-calibre speakers, iconic venues, and the conference’s warm, inclusive atmosphere. Keynote presentations by Dr Jordan Nguyen (4.90/5) and Professor Kelvin Kong AM (4.78/5), along with the Oration by Sir Peter Cosgrove (4.70/5), were highlighted for their inspirational content, strong delivery, and relevance to members’ interests.

Event-specific feedback also reflected strong satisfaction: the Welcome Reception at Government House and the Gala Dinner at the Sofitel were both praised for ambience, hospitality, and program quality, while the Remembrance Service and Handover Lunch aboard HMAS Adelaide (4.80/5) were described as uniquely moving and exceptionally well executed. Suggestions for improvement centred on enhancing youth inclusion, streamlining the AGM and Members’ Forum, improving program visibility of leadership roles, addressing affordability concerns, and offering hybrid access to sessions. Overall, the conference successfully combined ceremony, thought leadership, and fellowship, leaving an impression on both new and returning attendees.

The strong organisational performance and high-quality program set a new benchmark for future national conferences.

### **August 2025 National Member Survey.**

The survey responses provide a clear picture of a predominantly older, retired membership, many of whom continue to volunteer extensively outside the Association. A significant proportion of respondents identify mobility or other disabilities, which, together with cost, travel distance, and general time constraints, strongly shapes participation in both national and branch-level activities. Engagement with digital platforms varies widely: a substantial segment does not use social media, while others favour Facebook or LinkedIn; use of the OAA website is generally occasional. Members expressed strong interest in The Order magazine and OAA merchandise, offering extensive constructive feedback on both.

Awareness of the OAA Foundation is high, though conversion to donations remains limited. Text responses were notably detailed, with hundreds of comments across topics including branch activities, national conferences, social media development, membership growth, and the Association’s broader community contribution. These interconnected insights are now being synthesised by Directors and Branch Chairs into a cohesive action plan, with final decisions expected by early December.

Kind regards

*David*

**David North OAM**

NSW Branch Nominated Director

Email: 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.

**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**  
**Chief Petty Off Steven Edward Atkins OAM**  
**Ms Anne Veronica Gorman OAM**  
**Ms Wendy Elizabeth McCarthy AC**  
**Mrs Margaret Philippa Middleton 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**  
**MAJ Dianne Lynne Hutchinson OAM**  
**Ms Sharon Buckley OAM**  
**Mr Robert George Connors OAM**  
**Professor Jennifer Anne Westacott AC**  
**Mr Allan James Parker OAM**  
**Mr Gordon Wilson Gray OAM**  
**Ms Cheryl Dianne Deguara OAM**  
**Mr Craig Wentworth Perry OAM**  
**Mrs Bindi Shah OAM**  
**Mr John Bede Gorrie OAM**  
**Ms Fairy Sparkle OAM**  
**LTCOL Richard Joseph Woodburn OAM**  
**Mrs Beverley Gail Garside OAM**  
**Mr John Eric Pierce AO**  
**Mrs Catherine Jean Constable OAM**  
**Mr Paul Tuckerman OAM**

# Upcoming NSW Branch Events



## 45th Anniversary Long Lunch



We are delighted to invite you and your guests  
as we celebrate **45 years** of  
**The Order of Australia Association NSW Branch**  
and toast the Christmas Season!

**Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

Commencing at 12:00 PM until 4:00 PM

**Heritage Atrium, Hyatt Regency Sydney**, 161 Sussex Street.

Pre-lunch drinks followed by a 3 course seated lunch with alcoholic  
and non alcoholic beverages included. Entertainment by Alex Partridge Music.  
Members & Guests: \$110pp Dress: Lounge Suit/Cocktail Dress with large medals

[CLICK TO BOOK NOW](#)



THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA  
ASSOCIATION NSW BRANCH

# AUSTRALIA DAY 2026 CRUISE LUNCHEON

ABOARD MV CAPTAIN COOK III



FOR FRONT ROW SEATS ON PICTURESQUE  
SYDNEY HARBOUR THIS AUSTRALIA DAY  
**MONDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2026**

**EMBARKING AT 10.30 AM** FOR VESSEL DEPARTURE AT 10.45 AM SHARP  
RETURNING AT APPROXIMATELY 2.45 PM.

**BOARDING IS AT CIRCULAR QUAY WHARF 6**

PRE LUNCHEON DRINKS AND CANAPES WILL BE SERVED FOLLOWED BY A SEATED  
THREE COURSE LUNCHEON WITH A SELECTION OF SOFT AND ALCOHOLIC  
BEVERAGES ALL INCLUDED IN THE COST.

TICKET PRICES: ADULTS -\$190.00 PP (INC. GST)

CHILDREN AGED 5-14 - \$90 (INC GST) PLUS BOOKING FEE

DRESS: SMART CASUAL WITH LAPEL PIN/BROOCH

RSVP ESSENTIAL: NO LATER THAN 12<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2026

[CLICK TO BOOK NOW](#)

# 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.

### **Celebrate - purchase OAA items for yourself, family and friends**

This is a selection of the Items that can be purchased online or via phone

New tote bag



**\$12.00**

Silk scarf



**\$52.00**

Cuff Links



**\$35.00**

Cap



**\$21.00**

Bucket Hat **\$16.00**



Document Bag **\$37.00**



Enquiries Barb 0413 008 571

# 2025 OAA NSW Youth Community Service Awards at Government House Sydney

On 22nd August 2025 we held our Annual Youth Community Service Awards Presentation Ceremony at Government House Sydney. Our Patron and NSW Governor, Her Excellency Margaret Beazley AC KC, hosted the awards and acknowledged the contribution of 26 NSW Year 11 and 12 High School Children and presented them with a special certificate and trophy.

Our special thanks go to our Convenor, Dr Frank Kelleher OAM for successfully organising and guiding these awards over the past nine years. The NSW Branch is committed to promoting and recognising the inspirational achievements and exceptional community service of our youth. The citations are certainly true inspiration to us all.

The OAA Youth Community Service Award is conducted annually by the NSW Branch of the Order of Australia Association and recognises community service by individual students that would not normally be recognised by their school systems, which usually reward academic, sporting and leadership achievements. It recognises the significant service performed by students beyond their school boundaries in the wider community. This is in the areas of Campaigning and Fundraising, Mentoring and Volunteering.

The Award was initiated in 1992 by Dr John Lincoln AM and first offered in 1993. It has been offered each year since then (except in 2020 due to Covid). 2025 marks the 31st year of the awards.



# King's Birthday 25 Investiture Ceremonies Government House Sydney - Sept 2025



Above: Ms Sally Loane AM with her son - For significant service to business in board and governance roles, to charitable organisations, and to broadcasting.

Above Right: Ms Noemie FOX OAM and her family - For service to sport as a gold medallist at the Paris Olympic Games 2024.

Right: Mr Bruce Gordon AO and his family - For distinguished service to the media and television industries, and as a benefactor for sports and the arts.





Left: Mr Chris Gryllis OAM with his family and Dr John Gullotta AM -For service to the community of Orange.

Below left: Dr Julia James AM (in centre with friends)- for significant service to scientific research, particularly in the field of speleology.

Below right: Dr Michael Steiner AM with his sons and Dr John Gullotta AM - For significant service to medicine in the field of ophthalmology as a surgeon, and to professional associations.

Lower left: Roslyn Knights OAM (on left) and June Roots OAM (in red coat) with family members. Roslyn received her OAM for service to the community of Kyogle. June received her OAM for her service to the community of Penrith.

Lower Right: Vivian Simpson OAM (in centre) and family - for service to the community of Coffs Harbour.





Above left: Sisters Edith Collingridge OAM and Winsome Collingridge OAM (in the centre) with family members. They both received their OAM for service to the community of Hornsby.

Above right: Prof Philip Newall AM and his family - For significant service to audiology education and research, and to the community.

Below left: David Sams OAM (in the centre) with his son and brother - for service to the community of Port Stephens

Below right: Mr John McCarthy AM with his family and Dr John Gullotta AM and Ms Martha Jabour OAM For significant service to the Catholic Church in Australia, to the law, and to sports administration.



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

**The next Regional Convenors' Meeting** is scheduled for Friday, 5 December 2025 at 4:00 pm and will bring together representatives from all 15 NSW Regions, each characterised by its own distinct geographic, demographic, and community profile. This diversity—ranging from metropolitan centres to rural districts and coastal communities—ensures that a wide spectrum of member perspectives and operational priorities are reflected in Branch planning and decision-making. Members who wish to have regional matters considered at the meeting are encouraged to contact their Region Convenor, the NSW Branch Region Coordinator, or the NSW Branch Chair prior to the meeting date. This engagement helps ensure that the issues raised are both comprehensive and representative of the unique circumstances and aspirations of each region. The meeting will support ongoing collaboration, strengthen communication channels, and reinforce the shared commitment to effective governance across the NSW Branch.

**The OAA NSW Branch Youth Community Service Award 2026 (YCSA)** is a long-standing statewide program that recognises exceptional secondary school year 11 and 12 students who demonstrate exemplary leadership, sustained community service, and a commitment to civic responsibility. Delivered in partnership with NSW schools and community organisations, the Award highlights the values of service, integrity, and contribution to the broader community, and has become a prestigious element of the Association's youth engagement strategy. Each year, nominees are assessed on the depth and impact of their service, their initiative in addressing community needs, and their capacity to inspire others. The YCSA serves both as recognition of individual excellence and as an investment in cultivating future leaders who embody the ethos of the Order of Australia.

The NSW Branch acknowledges the dedicated leadership of Dr Frank Kelleher OAM, who is retiring after nine years as Convenor of the Youth Community Service Award. His stewardship has strengthened the Award's profile, expanded its reach, and ensured rigorous and fair assessment processes. The Branch extends its sincere appreciation for his outstanding service. The NSW Branch is also pleased to announce that Dr Gary Smith AM has accepted the role of Convenor and will lead the Award into its next phase of development. All regions are advised to begin preparing now for the commencement of the 2026 YCSA cycle. Early planning, proactive engagement with schools, and promotion within regional networks will be essential to ensuring a strong and diverse cohort of nominees for the next round.

**The Order of Australia Association Merchandise. (Please see Page 7).** The Order of Australia Association merchandise has been prominently displayed during visits by the NSW Branch Region Coordinator and Secretary to Regions, showcasing the breadth and quality of items available to members. The merchandise holds a tribal significance for the Association, symbolising shared values, recognition of service, and a unifying identity across regions. The range is extensive and distinctive, offering items that reflect the prestige and heritage of the Order while providing practical and commemorative options for members. All merchandise purchases are facilitated through the Association's online platform, with efficient fulfilment and customer support managed by Barbara Brook OAM. Members may also access the full merchandise via our website and The Order magazine. Merchandise is additionally available for direct viewing during the NSW Branch Region Coordinator's visits to regions, ensuring members can engage with the collection first-hand.

Kind regards

*David*

**David North OAM**

NSW Regional Group Coordinator | Email: dirnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

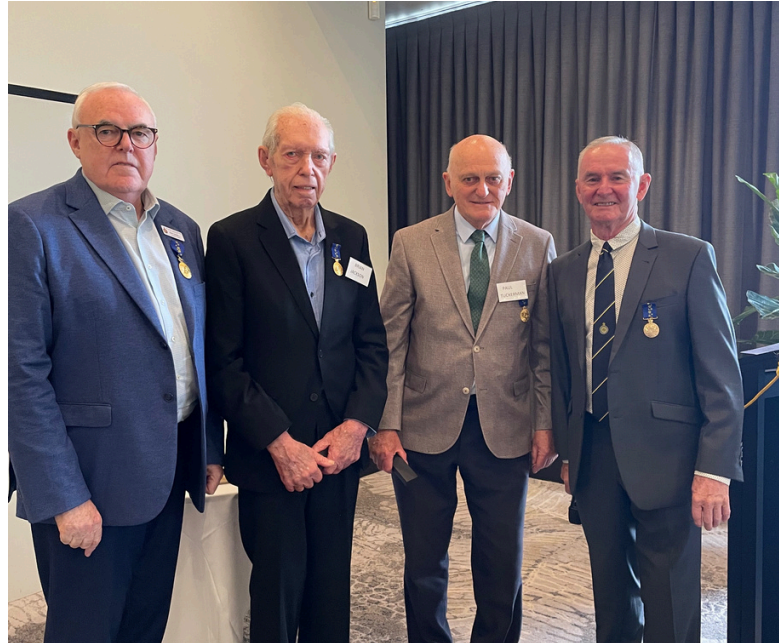
# AROUND THE REGIONS

## OAA Illawarra Regional Group

### Kings' Birthday Awardee High Tea - 7<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Report by Dianne North OAM

Our High Tea for our King's Birthday awardees was successful with 40 people attending. Three new awardees from the Illawarra and two from Shoalhaven were able to attend. We also had the Convenor from Shoalhaven, Rod Gibb OAM and Far South Coast, Jan Phillips AM attend, as well as several Shoalhaven OAA members. Speakers included local Youth Community Service Award 2025 recipients, Theo Adams and Alyssa Jeffries and husband and wife duo, Teresa Tran OAM and Hong-Phong Le OAM entertained the audience by singing a rendition of "We are Australian!"



# 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”***



**Mrs Noreida Joy Fotheringham OAM**  
**LTCOL Eric Alexander Richardson (Rtd) OAM**  
**Mrs Dawn Elaine Prowse OAM**  
**Mr Hector Simon Soans OAM**  
**Mrs Noreen Elva Fielding OAM**  
**LTCOL Vincent Edward Hallinan OAM**  
**Mrs Ellen Lorraine Williams OAM**  
**Mr Richard Geoffrey Love OAM**  
**Mr Daniel Gauchat AM**  
**Mr Brian C France AM**  
**Mr Barry Frederick Collins AM**  
**Mr Allan Drew OAM**  
**Mrs Marjorie Dawn Townsend OAM**  
**Mr Roger Climpson OAM**  
**Miss Phyllis Ferguson Bennett OAM**  
**Mrs Patricia Ann Gould OAM**  
**Assoc Professor Lynne Oliver AM**  
**Mrs Audrey Mae Blood OAM**  
**Mrs Shirley Chirgwin OAM**  
**Mrs Margaret Marion MacRAE OAM**  
**Mr Maurice Green AM**  
**Professor Lyndall Ryan AM**  
**Dr Alan Charles Grice OAM**  
**Mr Graham Norman Nock AM OBE**

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

*Thank you for reading!*