

# ACT OAA

## DECEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

### Branch Patron

Dr Sue Packer AO

### Branch Nominated Director

MAJGEN Michael Crane DSC and Bar AM

### Chair

Andrew Phelan AM

Chairact@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

0417 267 609 (M)

### Secretary

Robert Altamore OAM

altamr@bigpond.com

0423 931 753 (M)

### Treasurer

Phil Morrall AM, CSC

### Committee

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

### Branch website

[www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/ACT](http://www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/ACT)

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### COMING EVENTS

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**Tuesday 27 January 2026**  
**Australia Day Breakfast**  
**Royal Canberra Golf Club**  
**Yarralumla**

**Wednesday 11 February 2026**  
**AGM & Guest Speaker**  
**Royal Canberra Golf Club**  
**Yarralumla**

### AUSTRALIA DAY BREAKFAST – 27 JANUARY 2026



Our most popular event is the Australia Day Breakfast. Come and enjoy fellowship at the Royal Canberra Golf Club and celebrate the achievements of Australia Day awardees from the ACT and region. The guest speaker will be Branch Committee member Dr Joe Johnson CSC OAM AAM who had a long history of involvement with the Australian Antarctic Program and will speak about some of the challenges of polar leadership and of the Antarctic and the Southern Ocean.

Please note that this year we are meeting the following day due to unavailability of our favourite venue on 26 January. Bookings can be made at <https://www.stickytickets.com.au:8010/SK57HI> or complete the booking sheet with this newsletter.

Contact for this event is Mr Andrew Phelan AM at 0417 267 609 or [chairact@theorderofaustralia.asn.au](mailto:chairact@theorderofaustralia.asn.au).

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### AGM & GUEST SPEAKER – 11 FEBRUARY 2026

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) and guest speaker event will be held on Wednesday 11 February 2026 at the Royal Canberra Golf Club Yarralumla. The AGM is your chance to participate in the governance of our Branch. Come along to have your say on the Annual Report and who represents us on the Branch Committee in 2026.



Following the AGM, the guest speaker will be Branch nominated director Michael Crane DSC & Bar, AM. Mike will address issues raised in the recent OAA national survey of members, and actions the OAA Board are taking to address these. Bookings for this event can be made at <https://www.stickytickets.com.au:8010/2I37H1> for.

Contact for this event is Mr Andrew Phelan AM at 0417 267 609 or [chairact@theorderofaustralia.asn.au](mailto:chairact@theorderofaustralia.asn.au). Entry of course is free.

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### OAA 2026 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Bookings are now open for the OAA National Conference in Brisbane on 16-19 April 2026. Bookings can be made at <https://events.humanitix.com/the-order-of-australia-association-national-conference-2026> We hope you can join the ACT contingent at this event where the highlight will be the awarding by the Governor-General of life changing scholarships from The Order of Australia Foundation to exceptional and deserving university students.

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## CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Fellow Branch Members,

As 2025 draws to a close, we reflect on another successful year of events that brought our community together in celebration of service and achievement.

We were delighted to see so many members at our 50th Anniversary of the Australian Honours & Awards System Celebratory Lunch on Thursday 27 November, an occasion that honoured five decades of recognising excellence and service to our nation. Thanks again to our Patron, Sue Packer AO, and Committee member Phil Morrall AM CSC for speaking at the lunch. This was followed by our End-of-Year Celebration & Picnic on Thursday 4 December, which provided a wonderful opportunity for members to gather in a relaxed setting and enjoy each other's company as we reflected on the year's accomplishments.

The Branch has also made significant progress in elevating the profile of two of our signature initiatives: the annual Order of Australia Association – Australian Defence Force Oration and the Order of Australia Association – Australian National University Lecture. Both events, established to recognise the outstanding contributions of military and academic members of The Order of Australia society, now have dedicated pages on the Association's website featuring their complete histories, along with links to transcripts and videos where available. I encourage all members to explore these resources at the Branch pages of [theorderofaustralia.asn.au](http://theorderofaustralia.asn.au), and we will continue to promote these important initiatives through direct email communications, Branch Newsletters, *The Order*, and our Facebook page. I thank once again Emeritus Professor Mark Howden AC for the 2025 ANU Lecture and Chief of Defence Force, Admiral David Johnston AC RAN, for the 2025 ADF Oration.

As we approach the festive season, on behalf of the Committee I extend warmest wishes to all members and their families for a joyful Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year. We look forward to resuming our program of events in 2026, beginning with our Australia Day Breakfast at the Royal Canberra Golf Club on Tuesday 27 January, followed by the Branch Annual General Meeting, also at the Royal Canberra Golf Club, on Wednesday 11 February. Further details about both events can be found elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the dedicated work of our committee members, whose volunteer efforts throughout the year have made possible the range of activities and initiatives that enrich our Branch community. Their commitment of time, energy, and expertise deserves our sincere gratitude and appreciation. As we approach the AGM, I encourage members to consider nominating for Committee positions—fresh perspectives and new energy are always welcome, and service on the Committee offers a rewarding opportunity to contribute to the Association's important work and to connect more deeply with fellow members.

Warm regards  
Andrew

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## VALE

We regret to advise the recent passing of the following ACT Branch members and pay our respects for their contribution to the Association and the Australian community.

**Mr Garth MANSFIELD OAM** - Australia Day 1994 - For service to church music.

**Mr. Peter O'CLERY AM** - Queen's Birthday 2009 - For service to the Australian tourism industry, particularly through the establishment and development of research and education centres, and to the community.

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## BRANCH NOMINATED DIRECTOR'S REPORT



The Board met via teleconference on Friday 17 October and again on Friday 7 November.

At the October meeting, the Board:

- discussed high-level outcomes from the national survey;
- noted that the Audit & Risk Committee is managing issues around the Association's information technology security arrangements, including cybersecurity. It seems likely that additional investment will be required in this area.
- noted outcomes from the 2025 National Conference post-conference survey; and
- received a report from the National President on her recent meeting with our national Patron, the Governor-General. Her Excellency extended best wishes to members of the

Association and expressed her appreciation for our ongoing work.

At the November meeting, the Board approved the Association's national budget for FY2026 and agreed an approach to managing outcomes from the national survey. The National Chair has outlined key matters about the survey in the November Edition of *The Order*.

Best Regards

Michael Crane DSC & Bar AM

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## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2026

Our Annual General Meeting is your chance to participate in the governance of our Branch. Come along to have your say on the Annual Report and who represents us on the Branch Committee in 2026/27. The Annual Report will be promulgated online prior to the meeting. A Branch Committee nomination form is attached to this newsletter.

The AGM will be held at the **Royal Canberra Golf Club**, 71 Bentham St, Yarralumla and will start promptly at 6.00 pm. Light eats will be available after 5.30 pm.

### ACT Branch Annual General Meeting Wednesday 11 February 2026

#### Agenda

1. Welcome and opening remarks
2. Acknowledgement of Country
3. Apologies
4. Minutes of AGM held 12 Feb 2025
5. Matters Arising
6. Annual Report
7. Election of Branch Nominated Director and Committee for 2026-27
8. Other Business
9. Close

Following the AGM, the guest speaker will be Branch nominated director Michael Crane DSC & Bar, AM. Mike will address issues raised in the recent OAA national survey of members, and actions the OAA Board are taking to address these. Bookings can be made at <https://www.stickytickets.com.au:8010/2I37H1> for this event.

Contact for this event is Mr Andrew Phelan AM at 0417 267 609 or [chairact@theorderofaustralia.asn.au](mailto:chairact@theorderofaustralia.asn.au). Entry of course is free.

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## OAA-ANU LECTURE - PROFESSOR MARK HOWDEN AC - CLIMATE CHANGE

On 22 October 2025, Branch member Emeritus Professor Mark Howden AC FAA FTSE was the guest speaker at the annual OAA-ANU Lecture on the subject “**Go hard or go slow on climate change ? What’s in the national interest ?**” and he discussed the issues in the Australian transition to renewable energy, from the political discourse on trajectories of greenhouse gas emissions to the overall picture of the benefits of adaptation options. His presentation addressed the overall costs and benefits of climate action vs inaction. The lecture can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/m8xVumKUjFk>

Professor Howden is a Vice Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and was until recently the Director of the Australian National University Institute for Climate, Energy and Disaster Solutions and Chair of the ACT Climate Change Council.

He contributes to several other major national and international science and policy advisory bodies. Mark has worked on climate variability, climate change and innovation and adoption issues for almost 40 years in partnership with many industry, community and policy groups via both research and science-policy roles and is a high-profile public communicator.

Professor Howden helped develop the national and international greenhouse gas inventories that are a fundamental part of the Paris Agreement and pioneered sustainable ways to reduce emissions.

He has been a major contributor to the IPCC since 1991, with a record number of roles across all four dimensions of the IPCC: climate science, impacts and adaptation, mitigation and greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, sharing the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with other IPCC contributors and Al Gore.

Professor Howden was appointed a Companion of the Order of Australia in the 2025 King’s Birthday Honours *for eminent service to environmental science, to the global response on climate change and adaptation, to agriculture, and to tertiary education.*

The annual **Order of Australia Association – Australian National University Lecture** is an initiative of the ACT Branch of The Order of Australia Association. The Lecture was established in 2010 with the aim of further recognising the contribution made by academic members of the Order of Australia to the fabric of Australian society. It continues to address topics that shape our nation’s identity and future. Previous ANU Lectures are available at <https://theorderofaustralia.asn.au/act/events/oaa-australian-national-university-lecture/>



*Professor Mark Howden AC*



*Andrew Phelan AM, Professor Mark Howden AC*

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## GOVERNMENT HOUSE, YARRALUMLA, OPEN DAY – 1 NOVEMBER 2025

The Branch Chair and three members of the Branch Committee staffed a stall at the Government House Open Day, at which we displayed materials prepared by Phil Morrall AM CSC on the history of the Order, together with our medal display panel. Our Association banner and a banner we produced for the ACT Student Citizenship Awards were prominently displayed to highlight our main outreach program.

The Office of Official Secretary had a large, well-staffed stall, with great visual displays, and had new pamphlets on the nomination process changes available, some of which were made available for us to use in our stall. The event was well attended and held in great spirit, with the Governor-General circulating to the various stalls throughout the day.



*Andrew Phelan AM, Joe Johnson CSC OAM AAM, Lynne Duckham OAM, Her Excellency Sam Mostyn AC, Julie Long OAM*

## THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION – AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE ORATION TUESDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2025

The annual Order of Australia Association – Australian Defence Force Oration, established in 2011, is an initiative of the ACT Branch of the Association. In furtherance of the Association’s purpose and objects, the Oration has the dual aims of: recognising the contribution made by military members of the Order of Australia to the fabric of Australian society; and promoting community awareness of the strategies, ways and means through which the ADF seeks to achieve its mission and purpose ‘to defend Australia and its national interests in order to advance Australia’s security and prosperity.’

This year we were very grateful to Admiral David Johnston AC, RAN, Chief of the Australian Defence Force, for giving the 2025 Oration on *National Defence Strategy, Transformation of Capabilities and Defence Culture*. Admiral Johnston’s thoughtful examination of the National Defence Strategy has given us his eminent perspective on the strategic challenges and opportunities facing Australia, provided insights into the transformation of Defence capabilities and offered a compelling vision of how the ADF is adapting to meet the demands of an evolving security environment. Michael Crane DSC & Bar AM introduced Admiral Johnston and gave the vote of thanks.

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A transcript of Admiral Johnston's Oration is available at <https://theorderofaustralia.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Order-of-Australia-Association-Australian-Defence-Force-Oration-by-the-Chief-of-the-Defence-as-delivered.pdf>.

Previous Orations are available on the Association's website in the new page at <https://theorderofaustralia.asn.au/act/events/oaa-australian-defence-force-oration/>.



*Admiral David Johnston AC*



*Mike Crane DSC and Bar, AM, Admiral David Johnston AC, Andrew Phelan AM*

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## END OF YEAR CELEBRATION AND PICNIC – 4 DECEMBER 2025

The Branch organised an informal event with a difference to see out 2025! Committee members Lynne Duckham OAM and Joe Johnson CSC, OAM, AAM secured an appropriate lawn space at the Canberra Southern Cross Yacht Club for the attendees, and members and guests arrived to enjoy a relaxed socialising time in the late afternoon despite a strong wind trying to blow us away. Father Christmas arrived with gifts for all.



*Father Christmas with Julie Long OAM and family*



*Gillian Francis OAM and John Francis OAM*

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## 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF HONOURS & AWARDS CELEBRATORY LUNCH – THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER

Fifty members and guests met for delightful lunch at the Canberra Southern Cross Yacht Club to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Australian Honours and Awards System and the achievements of everyday Australians who have contributed to our nation and its communities. Our Branch Patron Dr Sue Packer AO spoke and highlighted the Order's role and impacts, giving a personal insight into her appreciation of the honours system as it is structured and how it rewards Australian citizens for community work and exceptional contributions to society. As a result of some deep research, Branch Treasurer Phil Morrall AM CSC gave an amusing and cryptic outline of linkages between many honours awardees.



*Dr Sue Packer AO*



*Margaret Royds OAM, Shirley Gollings OAM*



*Phil Morrall AM CSC*



*Dr Sue Packer AO, Liz Scrivener OAM*

## National Conference

Brisbane 16-19 April 2026



Ridges Southbank Hotel



BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE