

# ACT OAA

## MARCH 2026 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)

### 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)

### COMING EVENTS

**Wednesday 29 April 2026**  
**Reception**  
**Royal Canberra Golf Club**  
**Yarralumla**

**Tuesday 9 June 2026**  
**King's Birthday Lunch**  
**Royal Canberra Golf Club**  
**Yarralumla**  
**Further details TBA**

### RECEPTION FOR NEW RECIPIENTS – 29 APRIL 2026

Please join us to welcome and celebrate with ACT and area citizens awarded in the 2026 Australia Day Honours. This event will be held at The Royal Canberra Golf Club, Yarralumla on Wednesday 29 April and will follow the investitures to be held at Government House on 13-17 April.

Please book at <https://www.stickytickets.com.au/N0FFFX>

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).

### 2026 STUDENT CITIZENSHIP AWARDS

The members of the OAA-ACT Student Citizenship Awards sub-committee, Julie Long OAM, Dr Joe Johnson CSC, OAM, AAM and Prof Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt AO have begun the 2026 program to seek nominations from ACT government and independent schools and colleges before the end of the third school term for our annual Student Citizenship Awards which are planned to be presented in October. This program is the main outreach program for the Branch. There were 18 awards presented in 2025.

We are privileged that this year that Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor General has generously invited the Branch to have her present the awards to students at Government House.

### OAA 2026 NATIONAL CONFERENCE



It is not too late to book for the 2026 OAA National Conference in Brisbane on 16-19 April. 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 to meet other members, and where the highlight will be the awarding of life changing scholarships from The Order of Australia Foundation to exceptional and deserving university students. Details of events are at <https://theorderofaustralia.asn.au/national-conference-2026/>

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## CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Fellow Branch Members,

### **Australia Day Honours**

It is my great pleasure to congratulate all those ACT residents who received honours in the Australia Day 2026 Honours List. Each award recognises outstanding service to our community and nation, and we are privileged to welcome these new recipients into the Order of Australia family. I have written personally to each recipient to convey the Branch's congratulations and to extend an invitation to our New Recipients Reception on Wednesday 29 April. Details of this event can be found elsewhere in this newsletter, and I encourage Branch members to attend this important occasion.

### **ACT Branch Committee**

Following our Annual General Meeting, I am pleased to advise members of the composition of the 2026 Branch Committee. The full committee list, including term expiry dates, can be found on our website and is reproduced elsewhere in this newsletter.

The Committee comprises: Phil Morrall AM CSC (Treasurer), Lynne Duckham OAM, Greg Hood AO, Julie Long OAM, Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt AO, Joe Johnson CSC OAM AAM, David Templeman AM, Desmond Woods OAM, Mainul Haque OAM, Mike Crane DSC & Bar AM (Branch Nominated Director), and Bruce Trewartha OAM (co-opted).

I wish to record the Branch's deep gratitude to our retiring Secretary, Robert Altamore OAM, for his many years of tireless and dedicated service to the Branch. We are pleased that Robert will continue as a valued member of our Branch community. Thank you, Robert.

### **2026 Student Citizenship Awards**

I am delighted to announce that we have launched our 2026 Student Citizenship Awards program. As members will recall, the purpose of the Order of Australia Association is to celebrate and promote outstanding Australian citizenship, with one of our most important goals being to encourage young Australians in service to the nation. Our annual Student Citizenship Awards directly advance this mission by recognising the wonderful contributions school students make through community service, acts of kindness and outstanding citizenship within the ACT community.

This year's awards have particular significance. Her Excellency the Governor-General is, of course, the patron of the Order of Australia Association. Last year, Her Excellency graciously presented the awards herself, and during her address she suggested that Government House could host the 2026 ceremony. We have now formally requested that the ceremony take place at Government House in October 2026. If this proceeds, it will powerfully demonstrate the nation's appreciation for young people who embody the values of service and citizenship, while providing our award recipients with a memorable experience that will encourage their continued engagement with their communities.

We have written to all ACT school principals, parent associations, and the heads of the Catholic, Independent and Public-school systems, inviting nominations across three categories: individual students (Years 3-12) demonstrating sustained community service or outstanding citizenship projects; student groups (Years 3-12) with similar achievements; and Year 10-12 students demonstrating exceptional leadership, service and achievement.

Nominations close on Friday 14 August 2026, and we are emphasising that activities must demonstrate impact on the broader community, not just within the school environment. The selection panel will be

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looking for evidence of significant planning, sustained effort, and where relevant, active contribution to environmental sustainability.

These awards are one of the most important and rewarding activities our Branch undertakes. They allow us to inspire and acknowledge the next generation of community-minded Australians, and to demonstrate the ongoing relevance and value of the principles that underpin the Order of Australia. I encourage members to bring the awards program to the attention of young people in their networks who exemplify outstanding citizenship.

I look forward to seeing members at the New Recipients Reception on 29 April.

Warm regards  
Andrew

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## BRANCH NOMINATED DIRECTOR'S REPORT



The Board met via teleconference on Friday 20 February. The Board:

- Accepted the Strategy Committee's recommendations for progressing outcomes from the 2025 Member Survey. An initial tranche of five actions will be assigned to Board committees and members will be kept advised by the Board as implementation proceeds. I briefed ACT Branch members about the survey and its outcomes following the Branch AGM on 11 February.
- Noted draft financial statements for the period ending 31 December 2025 (the Association's FY25). The Board considered final statements on 25 March. Results will be available to members when papers for the AGM are circulated.
- Noted progress reports from QLD and SA Branches on the 2026 and 2027 National Conferences respectively.
- Noted a report from the A&R Committee regarding progress on a review of the Association's Information Technology arrangements. A contract has since been signed with a contractor for the conduct of the review.
- Agreed an approach to coming elections for the positions of National Chair, National Treasurer and Deputy National Chair.

Warm regards,  
Michael Crane DSC & Bar AM

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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.

**Ms Jill MORTIMER-DAVIDSON OAM** - Australia Day 1985 - Australian High Commission, Port Louis Mauritius. For Public Service.

**Mr Kenneth STONE OAM** – For service to the community through a range of organisations.

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## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS FROM THE 2026 AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS

**Air Commodore Jo BRICK AM.** For exceptional service to the Royal Australian Air Force in military legal services and staff appointments.

**Wing Commander Nadia HARRISON AM CSM.** For exceptional service in development and realisation of expeditionary cyberspace provisioning capabilities for the Royal Australian Air Force.

**Rear Admiral Brett SONTER AM RAN.** For exceptional performance of duty in senior Australian Defence Force management and international relationship roles.

**Mrs Caroline BARTLETT OAM.** For service to public administration.

**Warrant Officer Cheryl COLLINS OAM CSM.** For meritorious performance of duty as Command Warrant Officer Training Force, Command Warrant Officer Navy People, and Warrant Officer Joint Operations Command.

**Dr William O'MALLEY OAM.** For service to baseball, and to public administration.

**Dr Stephanie REEDER OAM.** For services to children's literature.

**Mr John SULLIVAN OAM.** For service to the community through emergency response organisations.

## FROM THE 2021 QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

**Professor Ute ROESSNER AM.** For significant service to tertiary education, particularly to the biosciences.

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2026

Our Annual General Meeting was held at the Royal Canberra Golf Club on Wednesday 11 February with a good attendance of members and guests. Relevant meeting documents including the Annual Report were available to members online prior to the meeting. Continuing committee members were re-elected along with Branch Nominated Director Michael Crane DSC & Bar AM. Long serving Secretary Robert Altamore OAM retired from the committee and was thanked for his service to the Branch.



Following the AGM, Branch Nominated Director Michael Crane DSC & Bar AM discussed issues raised in the recent OAA national survey of members, and actions the OAA Board are taking to address these.

Mike explained that the survey had originated from a desire by Branch Chairs to understand the issues that are important to members. More than 1730 members responded to the survey, including 102 from the ACT and the total represented about 21% of the national membership. This response rate was statistically significant, and several other metrics tended to support a view that the response was generally representative of member demographics by age, gender, length of membership and membership type.

Mike went on to explain the process the Board had used for analysis of the survey results, including how Artificial Intelligence had been employed. Four key themes were identified, which largely overlapped with the objectives in the Board's Strategic Plan. More than 60 potential actions were identified, of which the Board chose five top priorities for initial focus. These actions will be progressed through Board committees.

The slides supporting Mike's presentation are available on the website <https://theorderofaustralia.asn.au/act/events/>

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## AUSTRALIA DAY BREAKFAST – 27 JANUARY 2026

Eighty members attended our annual Australia Day Breakfast and celebrated the achievements of Australia Day awardees from the ACT and region. The guest speaker was Branch Committee member Dr Joe Johnson CSC OAM AAM who had a long history of involvement with the Australian Antarctic Program and spoke about some of the challenges of polar leadership and of the Antarctic and the Southern Ocean. Guests enjoyed hearing the personal anecdotes of issues that arose over his time as Station Leader at Casey and Davis Bases, including relationships with Chinese and Russian stations.

Joe's leadership resulted in the awarding of the Antarctic Medal in 2001 and the 2022 Phillip Law medal in recognition of his outstanding contribution to Antarctic affairs and the wider Antarctic Community, particularly for his Station and Voyage Leadership; as Antarctic Names & Medal Committee Chairman and work in relation to the Antarctic Air link and service to the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE) Club. Dr Johnson was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 2020 *for service to veterans, and to the community.*

The slides from Joe's presentation can be viewed at <https://theorderofaustralia.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Antarctic-Presentation-for-OOAA-Copy-2.pdf>



*Madeleine Johnson, Dr Joe Johnson CSC OAM AAM, Andrew Phelan AM, Monica Phelan*

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*Hilton Kobus AM, Narelle Hargreaves AM, Madeleine Johnson*



*Brendan Cox, Ross Kingsland AM*

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## CELEBRATE - PURCHASE OAA ITEMS FOR YOURSELF, FAMILY, FRIENDS

The items below are part of a selection of OAA Items that are available from \$7.00 to \$52.00 and can be purchased online at [www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/shopping-cart](http://www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/shopping-cart) or via phone enquiries to Barb at 0413 008 571

**Key Ring in  
Gift Box**



**\$12.00**

**Blue knit scarf**



**\$26.00**

**Cuff Links**



**\$35.00**

**Cap**



**\$21.00**

**Beanie**



**\$18.00**

**Document Bag**



**\$37.00**

**Socks**



**\$11.00**



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## MEET OUR MEMBERS – AWARDED COUPLE

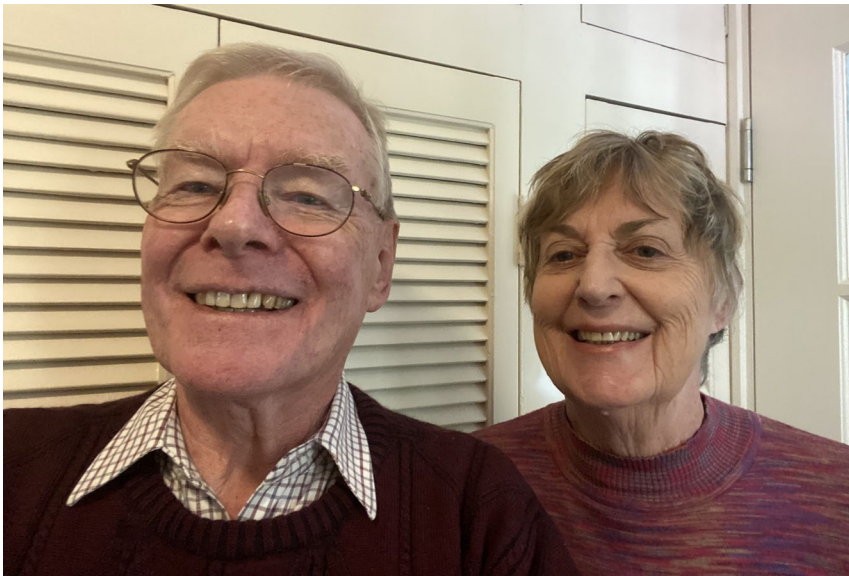
### BILL & LOIS MAIDEN

#### Dr Bill Maiden PSM OAM

Dr Bill Maiden retired in 2012 after a teaching career of 43 years in N.S.W. and the A.C.T. He possesses an undergraduate degree, two Masters degrees (UNE) and a Ph.D (UC), has contributed greatly to the education system in Canberra, was the foundation principal at two schools and critical in the opening of other new schools.

For many years, Dr Maiden served as a community member and was Deputy Chairperson of the now restructured ACT Non-Government Schools Education Council and was Chair of the ACT Teacher Quality Institute Board. In recognition of his distinguished career and outstanding service to education and professional organisations, he was awarded the Public Service Medal in 2005 *for outstanding public service within the ACT government school system* and a Medal of the Order of Australia in 2017 *for service to education in the Australian Capital Territory*.

Dr Maiden has taught Masters' programs at the University of Canberra and on three occasions was invited by the University of Canberra to teach in its Master of Educational Leadership summer school program in Hangzhou and Harbin, China. He received the UC Alumni Excellence Award for Education, Science, Technology and Maths in 2017.



*Dr Bill Maiden PSM OAM and Lois Maiden OAM*

Bill served on the Branch Committee for several years and led our Student Citizenship Awards program during that time.

Dr Maiden reflected that “To have been involved in education as a career, and to have had the pleasure of working with so many fine educators across many levels and sectors, has been highly rewarding and satisfying. I could never have imagined, when I started out as a teacher, that the professional and academic experiences throughout my working life would have given me such stimulation and enjoyment as well as an abiding interest in education and lifelong learning.”

#### Lois Maiden OAM

The teaching career of Lois Maiden began in 1969 in primary schools in NSW. Since moving to the ACT in 1977, her teaching experience has covered early childhood years through to senior primary classes and included a teaching posting for three years at Christmas Island. Following retirement, Lois has taught music on a voluntary basis twice each week at Totom House Early Childhood Centre Kaleen since 2014, where she teaches a variety of activities including musical games, instruments, songs and notation to separate groups of children spanning three age groups from 4 months to 5 years old: namely babies, toddlers and pre-school children.

She received a Children's Week 'Community for Children Award' in 2018 and was a finalist for the ANZUK (Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom Early Childhood Education) Volunteer of the Year Awards, 2022.

On Australia Day 2024 Lois was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia *for service to primary and early childhood education*. Her award was noted as a rare recognition for workers in the childcare sector within the 2024 honours.

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