

ACT OAA

JUNE 2026 NEWSLETTER

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Branch Nominated Director

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Phil Morrall AM, CSC

Committee

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Mainul Haque OAM

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

COMING EVENTS

Wednesday 8 July 2026

Morning Tea

Royal Canberra Golf Club

Yarralumla

Wednesday 23 September 2026

King's Birthday Lunch

Royal Canberra Golf Club

Yarralumla

MORNING TEA – 8 JULY 2026

The ACT Branch welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the 2026 National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observation Committee (NAIDOC) Week.

On Wednesday 8 July, at the Royal Canberra Golf Club, the Branch is delighted to host a morning tea and discussion with two well recognised First Nations' youth leaders from the ACT Region, Ms Poppy Chalmers and Ms Kyah Adams.

Poppy Chalmers is a proud Yuin woman from the South Coast who works as a Corporate Administration Officer at Allied Health Australia. She is also a young board member and is actively involved across a range of spaces focused on community, leadership, advocacy, and creating stronger opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Kyah Adams is a proud Birri-Gubba and Torres Strait Islander woman currently in her third year of a Bachelor of Arts degree at the Australian National University, majoring in linguistics - specifically Indigenous languages and the lexicographical aspect of language revitalisation.

She is currently employed with the Department of Employment and workplace Relations as a policy officer in the Workers Compensation team through an initiative called the Murra Program. Poppy and Kyan will discuss some of the many challenges impacting on First Nations' People, particularly in sustaining and maintaining social cohesion and community resilience

Committee member David Templeman AM will assist in facilitating the conversation with Poppy and Kyah.

This event is free of charge and bookings can be made at <https://www.stickytickets.com.au/BJGOD2> 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.

RECEPTION FOR NEW RECIPIENTS – 23 SEPTEMBER 26

Please join us to welcome and celebrate with ACT and area citizens awarded in the 2026 King's Birthday Honours. This event will be held at The Royal Canberra Golf Club, Yarralumla on Wednesday 23 September and will follow the investitures to be held at Government House.

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

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Fellow Branch Members,

King's Birthday Luncheon

The ACT Branch held its 2026 King's Birthday Luncheon on Tuesday 9 June at the Royal Canberra Golf Club, and it was a most memorable occasion. Some 65 members and guests gathered to celebrate the outstanding Australians recognised in the King's Birthday Honours List, including the many local recipients. We were privileged to have as our guest speaker Admiral Chris Barrie AC RAN (Rtd), whose 42-year career in the Royal Australian Navy culminated in four years as Chief of the Defence Force. Admiral Barrie spoke with authority and candour on current community issues impacting Australia and its wellbeing, drawing on his distinguished career and his continuing engagement — through the Australian National University, his advocacy on climate and national security, his leadership of PTSD Australia New Zealand, and his current contribution to public debate on AUKUS — to offer our members a perspective that was at once informed, frank, and inspiring. My sincere thanks to

Lynne Duckham OAM, Bruce Trewartha OAM, Joe Johnson CSC OAM AAM, Phil Morall AM CSC, and all Committee members whose efforts made the day such a success.

King's Birthday Honours

It is my great pleasure to congratulate all those ACT and regional NSW residents who received Honours and Awards in the 2026 King's Birthday 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. I am writing personally to each recipient to convey the Branch's congratulations and to extend an invitation to our New Recipients Reception on Wednesday 23 September 2026. Details of this event can be found elsewhere in this newsletter, and I encourage Branch members to attend this important occasion.

NAIDOC Week — Morning Tea with Poppy Chalmers and Kyah Adams

The ACT Branch is delighted to contribute to 2026 NAIDOC Week with a morning tea and conversation on Wednesday 8 July 2026. Our guests are two remarkable First Nations young women from the ACT region: Ms Poppy Chalmers, a proud Yuin woman from the south coast and Corporate Administration Officer at Indigenous Allied Health Australia, who brings to the discussion her experience navigating professional environments as a young Aboriginal woman and her passionate commitment to cultural safety and representation; and Ms Kyah Adams, a proud Birri-Gubba and Torres Strait Islander woman and the first in her family to attend university, currently completing a Bachelor of Arts at the ANU majoring in Indigenous languages and linguistic revitalisation, and employed as a policy officer in the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations through the Murra Program. Together, Poppy and Kyah will discuss the challenges of sustaining social cohesion and community resilience for First Nations peoples, and share their experiences of balancing identity, culture, leadership, and professionalism in contemporary Australia. David Templeman AM will facilitate the discussion. This promises to be a rich and illuminating morning, and I warmly encourage members to attend.



Visit by the National Chair — William Lye OAM KC

Monica and I were delighted to welcome William Lye OAM KC to our home on Saturday 20 June 2026 for an evening with Branch Committee members. William was in Canberra to attend a Refugee Week event at Government House, at which our new Association President, the Hon Hieu Van Le AC, delivered the keynote address. The occasion reinforced the close relationship between the Association and Government House, and William's engagement with the Branch Committee was both warmly received and a timely reminder of the value

that flows from open dialogue between the national body and its branches.

Warm regards
Andrew

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BRANCH NOMINATED DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Changes in Association Leadership. Since my last report, there have been several very significant changes to our national leadership:

- William Lye OAM KC (Vic) has been elected National Chair; he succeeds Barry Nunn AO, whose long service as National Chair was celebrated at the National Conference.
 - David North OAM (NSW) has been elected as National Deputy Chair. David was previously the Branch Nominated Director (BND) for NSW; he succeeds William, who did not stand for re-election as Deputy.
 - Frank Crawley OAM (WA) has been re-elected as National Treasurer.
 - Rex Wild AO KC joined the Board in April as the BND for NT. Gary Smith AM has been appointed to succeed David North as BND for NSW. Noel Hender OAM BEM has retired as BND for SA to concentrate on planning the National Conference in Adelaide next year; he is succeeded by Toni Cocchiaro OAM.
- On 30 May, National President Vicki O'Halloran AO CVO retired at the end of her three-year term. Vicki has been succeeded by Hieu Van Le AC.

Outreach Project. The Board is progressing plans for a joint venture with the Menzies Foundation to produce a series of podcasts showcasing selected recipients of honours and awards in the Order. Her Excellency the Governor-General is strongly supportive and will feature in at least one of the podcasts.

National Conference. The 2026 National Conference and AGM were held in Brisbane from 17-19 April, a little early this year to avoid conflict with a major sporting event. The QLD Branch Committee produced an excellent event in a stunning location, including a range of outstanding conference speakers, terrific side-visits and a moving wreath-laying service. Five Foundation scholarships were presented at the Conference Dinner. A small band of ACT Branch members made the pilgrimage to Brisbane and greatly enjoyed the experience. I strongly encourage all members of the Branch to consider heading to Adelaide in 2027, where we're sure to be treated to another terrific program. And for your diaries – the ACT is scheduled to host the Conference again in 2030, the Association's 50th Anniversary year!

Warm regards,

Michael Crane DSC & Bar AM

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS FROM THE 2026 KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Wing Commander Todd WOODFORD AM. For exceptional service in the advancement of Australia's airborne electronic attack and long-range strike capabilities.

Dr William DONOVAN AM. For service to secondary education, and to the community.

Warrant Officer Scott ATKINSON OAM. For meritorious service in the advancement of catering capabilities for the Royal Australian Air Force.

Mr Gerard GILLESPIE AM. For significant service to conservation, to organic waste management, and to the community.

Dr Peter HENDERSON OAM. For service to obstetrics and gynaecology.

Dr Paul JENKINS OAM. For service to medicine as a paediatrician.

FROM THE 2026 AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS

Mrs Catherine HINDSON OAM. For service to community health.

Mrs Viola KALOKERINOS OAM. For service to the community of Canberra.

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APRIL RECEPTION FOR NEW AWARDEES

Seventy-five Branch members and guests gathered at the Royal Canberra Golf Club on 29 April to welcome eleven new recipients of honours in the Australia Day awards. This event followed their investiture at Government House earlier in April. We have ten new members from the Australia Day awards. The Branch welcomes the contribution made by the ACT Government towards facilitating the welcome event.



Tony Morris OAM, Barry Cranston OAM, Flt Lt Chris Rhone OAM, Viola Kalokerinos OAM, Andrew Phelan AM, Jenny Tyrrell OAM, Dr Stephanie Reeder OAM, Dr Bill O'Malley OAM, Dr Caroline Bartlett OAM, Kylie Walker AM, Air CDRE Jo Brick AM, Catherine Hindson OAM.



John Kalokerinos, Viola Kalokerinos OAM, Phillip Flood AO



Tony Tyrell, Catherine Hindson OAM



Professor Mark Howden AC, Kirsten Sharman



Julie Long OAM, Stephanie Reeder OAM, Fred Smith OAM

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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.

Captain Peter DECHAINEUX RAN (Retd) AM - Australia Day 1985 - In recognition of service to the Material Division of the RAN.

Dr David de SOUZA AM – Queen’s Birthday 1992 - In recognition of service to community health.

Brigadier Robert FISHER (Retd) AM – Australia Day 1984 - In recognition of service to the Training Command.



KING’S BIRTHDAY LUNCH – 9 JUNE 26

Over sixty members attended our annual King’s Birthday Lunch and celebrated the achievements of King’s Birthday awardees from the ACT and region. The guest speaker at the lunch was former Chief of Defence Force, Admiral Chris Barrie AM speaking on the topic ‘*Current community issues that are impacting Australia and its Wellbeing*’. Admiral Barrie spoke with authority on current community issues impacting Australia and its wellbeing, drawing on his distinguished career and his continuing engagement — through the Australian National University, his advocacy on climate and national security, his leadership of PTSD Australia New Zealand, and his current contribution to public debate on AUKUS — to offer our members a perspective that was informed, frank, and inspiring. Admiral Barrie was appointed a Companion of the Order of Australia in 2001 *for eminent service to the Australian Defence Force as Chief of the Defence Force*.



Andrew Phelan AM, Admiral Chris Barrie AC Dr Douglas Sturkey CVO AM KStJ, Abdul Hashim OAM, John Lawrence OAM KStJ



Dr Caroline Bartlett OAM, Lynne Duckham OAM



Kelly Weber, Gillian Francis OAM

MEET OUR MEMBERS – Dr Douglas Sturkey CVO, AM, KStJ

New Zealand born Dr Douglas Sturkey CVO, AM, KStJ is a former Australian diplomat and Official Secretary to the Governor-General of Australia. He grew up in Western Australia and was a member of the diplomatic staff of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade from 1957 to 1990, during which time he served at seven Australian missions abroad, and at departmental headquarters in Canberra. He held many senior appointments including Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations, New York and Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and other states in the Arabian Peninsula. In Canberra he was Principal Adviser responsible for policy advice to the government on matters relating to Australia's relations with Southeast Asia.

In 1990 Douglas was appointed to succeed Sir David Smith as Official Secretary to the Governor-General of Australia, a position he held until 14 July 1998.

Dr Sturkey was made a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order (CVO) In the UK New Year Honours List of January 1995 for his services as the Official Secretary to the Governor-General.

In the Queen's Birthday Honours List of June 1999, he was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia *for his services as the Official Secretary to the Governor-General, to the Australian Diplomatic Service, and to the Canberra community.*

Dr Sturkey is also a Knight of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem and he was a Priory Officer of the Order in Australia, being the Order's Director of Ceremonies.

Following his retirement, Douglas completed a Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy within the Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies at the Australian National University. Dr Sturkey's doctoral dissertation was on the Clinton Administration's attempt to effect a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute and the thesis was subsequently acknowledged by his peers as diplomatic history at its best. Dr Sturkey was previously a visiting fellow at the Australian National University where his research interests included Middle East politics, the Arab-Israeli dispute, and Gulf security.

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2026 OAA NATIONAL CONFERENCE – BRISBANE

ACT Branch members and partners enjoyed the OAA National Conference in Brisbane on 16-19 April. The conference was well attended, and our members enjoyed the fellowship, events, the keynote speakers and presenters, outside visits and the Conference dinner where five exceptional students were presented with OAA Foundation scholarships. We are looking forward to the Conference in Adelaide in 2027 which is considering a hybrid option for attendance.



Dianne Trewartha, Bruce Trewartha OAM, Monica Phelan, Andrew Phelan AM, Lynne Duckham OAM, Mike Crane DSC & Bar, AM.

Booking sheet for NAIDOC MORNING TEA - WEDNESDAY 8 JULY 2026

TIME – 10.15 am – 12.00 pm

VENUE – Royal Canberra Golf Club, Yarralumla.

COST - Free

DRESS - Lounge Suit/Business Attire with Lapel pin.

1. Register online (preferred) at StickyTickets <https://www.stickytickets.com.au/BJGOD2> by 2 July 2026 or

2. Mail booking sheet to:

Mr. Phil Morrall AM CSC, 9 McQuoid Street, Kambah, ACT, 2902

Any questions, please contact Andrew Phelan AM on 0417 267 609.

Name and Postnominals:

Guest name(s) & Postnominals:

Dietary requirements
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