



The Order of Australia Association

NSW Branch Newsletter

June 2024

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

PO Box 561, Parramatta, NSW 2124 | www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au/nsw



From your NSW Chairman John Gullotta AM

Dear NSW Members,

It has been a busy time with attending the National conference in Perth and the Australia Day 2024 Investitures at Government House Sydney. We will be hosting the annual luncheon for the AD24 New Recipients and their guests at NSW Parliament House in July.

As we come out of a highly successful National Conference in Perth, preparations are well under way for the Sydney Conference May 1-4th 2025 which marks 50 years of The Order of Australia Awards and 45 years of our Association.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that the Welcome reception has been confirmed at Government House Sydney and the Wreath Laying Ceremony, Farewell Luncheon and handover to Darwin will be held aboard the *HMAS Canberra*. On behalf of the Association, sincere thanks to our NSW Branch Patron and NSW Governor Her Excellency The Hon Margaret Beazley AC KC and to Rear Admiral Christopher Smith AM, CSM, RAN, Commander Australian Fleet, Royal Australian Navy for your kind generosity and strong support of our Association.

I look forward to all of you joining us at SYD25! We are looking for company and also individual sponsors so please contact me if you can help in any way.

We will be soon meeting with our Regional Group Chairs to strengthen our regions, increase membership and arranging functions both regionally and in Sydney.

I look forward to seeing some of you at our upcoming events.

Kind regards

John

Dr John Gullotta AM

NSW Chairman

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From your NSW National Director David North OAM

Twenty-two New South Wales Order of Australia Association members attended the 2024 National Conference in Perth 16 -19 May led by our Branch Chair Dr John Gullotta AM

The theme of the conference was "Giving Service Beyond Self" and the key note speakers certainly exemplified this in their work and achieving national recognition. Hence receiving their Order of Australia award.

Highlights of the conference included the welcoming at Government House, the incredible key note speakers, the opportunity to visit and enjoy the vibrance of Perth, the Annual General Meeting and Members Forum, the Conference Dinner and Scholarship Presentation to six awardees, the Wreath Laying at Kings Park War Memorial, the Farwell lunch at Frasers Restaurant overlooking Kings Park and the Handover to New South Wales for the 2025 National Sydney Conference. For those able to remain for Evensong at St George's Cathedral followed by supper (a banquet) in Burt Hall this was magnificent. The musicians and choir providing a beautiful end to the Perth Conference.

Our congratulations to the Bettine Heathcote AM WA Branch Chair and her committee. Before lunch on the Friday, our NSW Branch Chair, Dr John Gullotta, spoke on the Sydney 2025 conference and a video welcoming members to Sydney in 2025 was shown. This video contains the Governor General, the NSW Governor, the NSW Premier, the Lord Mayor Sydney, and our NSW Branch Chair to come to Sydney. This video was received with applause, and I believe much pride for those NSW members attending.

Over the conference our NSW Branch Chair and team manned at table at the entry to each event with promotional material and gifts of chocolates, book marks, and coasters. A novel approach of getting attendees to scan a QR code on the coaster to register an expression of interest to attend the Sydney conference was introduced resulting in 78 (possibly 150 persons) expressing an interest in attending our conference. A most positive result for the team's effort in promoting Sydney 2025 (SYD25).

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 Marie L Russell AM
Mrs Cressida R Campbell AM
Mr Dallas W Booth AM
Dr John Vallance AM
Mr Peter Bacha OAM
Mrs Daphne Carswell OAM
Dr Robin B Fitzsimons AM
Mr Christopher Allen Pash OAM
A/ Professor Amanda White OAM



As we come out of a highly successful National Conference in Perth, our congratulations go to WA Chair and Convenor Bettine Heathcote AM and her team for their hard work in arranging such an informative and successful conference..

There were 22 delegates from NSW and our bid for SYD 25 was well received with our video and our stand pictured below. My thanks go to David and Dianne North, Louise Paisley and Geoffey Glassock for their hard work in manning the stand and handing out chocolates (courtesy of Stuart Alexander), book marks and coasters to all the delegates wearing our SYD 25 T-shirts with pride!
Thanks also to my wife Mara for her hard work in arranging and co-designing the banners, flyers, coasters and T-shirts!

Our SYD 25 video was shown on the Friday to great accolades and my sincere thanks to Phil Carey from Cornerstone Media for his excellent production work.
To see it click on the link below:

[CLICK HERE TO SEE THE SYD 25 PROMOTIONAL VIDEO](#)

OAA National Conference Report by Di North OAM

The National Conference was held at the Hyatt Regency Perth from the 16th to the 19th May. It was great to see 22 people from NSW out of the 198 people who had registered to attend. The conference was launched on the Thursday night at Government House with drinks and canapes hosted by the Western Australian Governor, Chris Dawson AC APM.

The conference commenced on Friday morning with the Oration from the Hon. Malcolm McCusker AC KC. During the day there were a number of interesting guest speakers.

Susan Boyd AO spoke about her life as a diplomat in the Australian Foreign Service.

Fiona Wood AO spoke about becoming one of Australia's top burns specialists.

Amber Merritt is a Paralympic basketball player and spoke about her life.

Dimitri Tsagari is a young, 20 year old Rotarian and spoke about his project which mentors high school students.

Dawn Mills is a domestic violence advocate.

Glenys McDonald AM found the HMAS Sydney off the coast of Western Australia after it was sunk in battle in 1941, during World War II, with the loss of every sailor on board. Glenys's discovery was against all odds. She was told over and over to forget it and leave it to the experts, that she was looking in the wrong place. She was only a woman with no nautical knowledge, but she not only found the Sydney but also the German ship HSK Kormoran that sank her. Another amazing discovery was that Glenys linked the body of the unknown soldier found in a grave on Christmas Island to be one of the sailors from HMAS Sydney. That was through DNA analysis. Can you imagine the relief of all the families of these sailors when their final resting place was discovered? Glenys told the most amazing, heart wrenching story.

Andrea Credo is from the Multicultural Women's Health Service.

Michelle Fyfe spoke about her work with homeless veterans.

Rahul Khubchandani was one of the first recipients of a Foundation Scholarship, who told us what the scholarship has meant to him.

Saturday morning was the AGM and Member's Forum where many interesting questions were raised including the length of time it takes for a nomination to be submitted and then to be approved. This currently may take up to four years. Rob Ayling from the Governor General's Department provided more information on this and explained that they were taking steps to improve this.

There was discussion about the benefits of OAA membership.

National Membership Director, Kathy Wooldridge OAM, gave a presentation on the Strategic Plan.

The Gala Dinner was held on the Saturday night. It was a wonderful evening with great companionship and conversation with good food and wine. During the evening six young people from around Australia were awarded Foundation Scholarships. They were all very well deserving recipients. Their parents accompanied them, and it was a joy to see how excited and proud their parents were.

Sunday morning started with an emotional wreath laying ceremony at the War Memorial in Kings Park. This was followed by a delicious farewell lunch in Frasers Restaurant also in Kings Park. There was a formal handover of the conference to A/Prof John Gullotta AM the NSW OAA Chair and Chair of the Sydney Conference Committee.

Those staying around a little longer were invited to Evensong at St George's Terrace Cathedral followed by supper supplied by church members.

There was a great deal of interest from conference attendees in the national conference which will be in Sydney from the 1st to 4th May 2025 (SYD25), particularly after the promotional video was shown on Friday morning. Six of the NSW Conference Committee heavily promoted SYD25. They all wore conference t-shirts and handed out coasters with a special QR code so people could register their interest in attending. Around 150 people have already indicated that they would like to come to SYD25 next year. The committee had a table set up with conference flyers and bookmarks with a QR code so people can register to attend when the registration becomes live. They had brochures from surrounding areas, such as the Illawarra region, to give people an idea of what they could do pre or post conference. There were chocolates donated by Stuart Alexander Imports.

It was a great display to generate enthusiasm for SYD25, which will mark the 50th anniversary of the Order of Australia Honours. It will also mark 45 years of the Order of Australia Association.

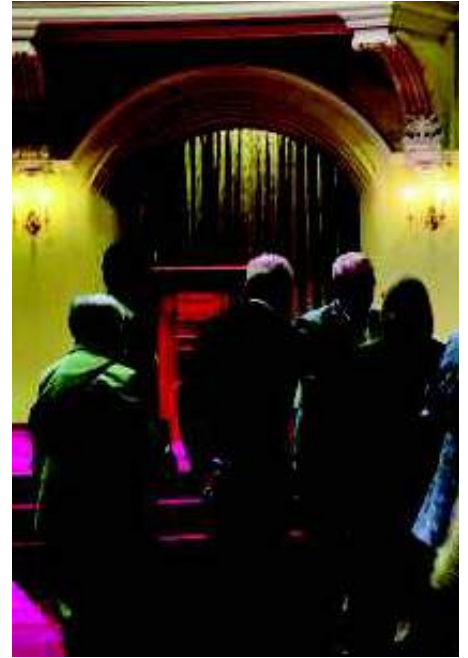
SYD 25 CONFERENCE PROMOTIONAL STAND



SOME NSW DELEGATES VISITING THE SYD 25 STAND



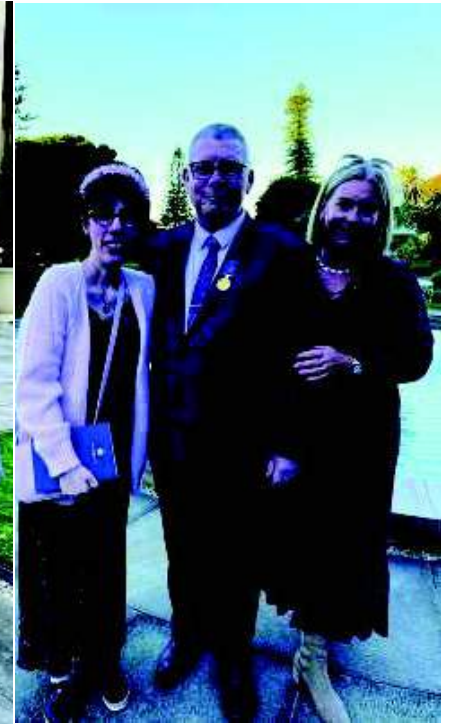
Welcome Reception at Government House WA, Conference Dinner at the Hyatt and a Conference Speaker Panel



Wreath Laying Service and Farewell Lunch with Handover to NSW for SYD 25



Australia Day 24 Investitures Government House Sydney



Australia Day 24 Investitures Government House Sydney



**STOP PRESS - GOVERNMENT HOUSE SYDNEY
AND HMAS CANBERRA NOW CONFIRMED!**



THE
ORDER OF AUSTRALIA
ASSOCIATION

*National Conference
Sydney 2025*

Conference Program

**THURSDAY
1st MAY**

- ✓ ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION AT SOFTEL SYDNEY WENTWORTH
- ✓ BOARD/BRANCH CHAIRS MEETING
- ✓ WELCOME RECEPTION AT NSW GOVERNMENT HOUSE

**FRIDAY
2nd MAY**

- ✓ ARRIVAL & REGISTRATION FOR CONFERENCE
- ✓ WELCOME TO COUNTRY & OFFICIAL OPEN
- ✓ ORATION & KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
- ✓ PANEL DISCUSSIONS
- ✓ EVENING EVENT TBC

**SATURDAY
3rd MAY**

- ✓ ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND MEMBERS' FORUM
- ✓ AFTERNOON AT LEISURE / OPTIONAL TOURS
- ✓ CONFERENCE DINNER & FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTATIONS

**SUNDAY
4th MAY**

- ✓ WREATH LAYING CEREMONY
- ✓ FAREWELL LUNCH AND HANDOVER TO DARWIN

**REGISTER YOUR INTEREST NOW!
FOR A SPECIAL EARLY BIRD RATE
SCAN THE BAR CODE OR
CLICK HERE TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST**



CELEBRATE | MOTIVATE | NOMINATE
"Inspiring Australian Achievers"
Celebrating 50 years of The Order of Australia

REGISTER NOW



[mers.cventevents.com/
QAACnfSYD25](https://mers.cventevents.com/QAACnfSYD25)

**SCAN FOR
EARLY BIRD
SPECIAL RATE**

JOIN US AT SYD25



From your Regional Group Co-ordinator David North OAM

SYD 25, the Order of Australia Association National Conference on 1 to 4 May 2025 will aim to promote Inspiring Australian Achievers to “Celebrate, Motivate, and Nominate”.

Now is the time to commit the beginning of May 2025 to visit Sydney and be a part of SYD 25. Regions should consider coming as a group. Travelling as a group, dining as a group at functions, and attending events as a group. The organising committee is looking for volunteers to assist in the running of the conference.

When I have a more comprehensive list of region events, I hope we can assist regions boost the number of attendees at events by encouraging neighbouring Regions to support one another, members travelling through regions may be able to join in Region events, and NSW Branch will support by attendance when possible.

Our NSW Branch Chair, Dr John Gullotta, has suggested Friday 12 July 2024 for a possible Region Convenors – NSW Branch Chair meeting at 4 pm by Zoom or Team. Could you let me know on rockspend@bigpond.com or dirnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au if this is a convenient date and time and if you prefer a Zoom or Team audio/visual meeting. The Youth Community Service Award is conducted annually by the NSW Branch of the Order of Australia Association and is being offered now with nominations closing on 7 June 2024. Hopefully, the material sent out by Frank Kelleher OAM (NSW convenor Youth Community Service Award) in mid-May has allowed you to approach and encourage local High Schools to participate.

Can I encourage each Region to visit the Association’s website and go to NSW and visit Regional News. This may suggest and encourage new ideas for your Region and also encourage you to send in photos and reports to be posted on this website. At the website you can click on Newsletter and catch up on newsletters you have missed, Meet Our Members may surprise you with someone you know or may meet in the near future, and under About Us, click on for the nomination brochure to guide you on nomination possible recipients in your Region.

Can I encourage Convenors and members to visit the Association’s website at least once a month and certainly just before any event to take along to those attending the latest information available on the Association.

Kind regards

David

David North OAM

NSW Branch Nominated Director

Email: dirnsw@theorderofaustralia.asn.au

Order of Australia Association Illawarra Group Luncheon 31st May 2024 - Report by Dianne North OAM

The Order of Australia Association Illawarra Group held a formal luncheon on Friday 31st May, at Dapto Leagues Club to acknowledge and honour the recipients of Order of Australia Awards on Australia Day 2024. 64 people had registered to attend but unfortunately, COVID struck and 7 people were unable to attend.

The Illawarra Convenor, Phil Thompson OAM, introduced the five Illawarra recipients present: **Giovanna Cardamone OAM, Warwick Shanks OAM, Wayne Morris OAM, Val Brunker OAM and Stephen Hewson OAM**. All are in the photo below with Mrs Louise Paisley OAM, NSW Branch Treasurer.

OAA pens were presented to each AD New recipient by Louise Paisley OAM who was also representing the OAA NSW Branch Chairman. Louise was accompanied by her husband, Peter. Louise addressed the audience, bringing greetings from the NSW Chair, Dr John Gullotta AM, who sent his apologies for not being able to attend and congratulated the new awardees on their Award and great achievements.

OAA NSW Branch Honorary Secretary Di North OAM spoke about the recent National Conference in Perth and gave information regarding next year's National Conference to be held in Sydney, urging Illawarra members to attend. The Illawarra Group is also running other activities such as their regular once a month Bunnings BBQ to raise funds for a university scholarship. Their next function will be a High Tea to recognise and congratulate the Kings Birthday Awards recipients.

The guest speaker was Chief Inspector Gary Raymond APM OAM (Ret'd). Gary outlined his policing career in Police Rescue and homicide investigations. He told some heart wrenching stories about the Granville Train Disaster and the Anita Cobby murder investigation. Gary told us about the establishment of Grace's Place at Doonside. This is a place of refuge for the families of homicide victims. It provides residential care and counselling services. This is a world first facility and was born out of the tragic murder of Anita Cobby and the dreadful impact on her family. Grace is Anita Cobby's mother.

Everyone attending agreed that it was a very successful day. It is wonderful to be able to celebrate with the recipients of Order of Australia Award honours.





Louise Paisley OAM
NSW Branch Treasurer



Chief Inspector Gary Raymond
APM OAM (Ret'd)
Guest Speaker



Dianne North OAM
OAA NSW Honorary Secretary and OAA Illawarra Events Co-Ordinator

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 John Archer OAM
Mrs Norma I Clarke OAM
Mr John Moore AM
Mr Tony Bleasdale OAM
Mr George E Richardson OAM
Mr Peter N Manettas AM



THE
ORDER OF AUSTRALIA
ASSOCIATION

**NATIONAL
CONFERENCE**
SYDNEY 1-4 MAY 2025

 Sofitel Sydney Wentworth

BECOME A SPONSOR

We are currently looking for sponsors and partners for our 2025 National Conference in Sydney. If you would like to be involved in sponsoring this milestone event, or know someone that can, then please contact the Conference Convenor, Dr John Gullotta AM on drjohngullotta@bigpond.com for further details and a sponsorship package.

*On behalf of our Chairman and the NSW Branch Committee
Thank you for reading!*