



NORTHERN TERRITORY NEWSLETTER

February 2007

NORTHERN TERRITORY BRANCH

Chair: Wendy James OAM

Postal Address

PO Box 2171 Parap NT 0804

Patron: His Honour the Administrator, Mr Ted Egan AO

Australia Day Honours

Congratulations

Australia Day 2007 brought nine awards to Territorians within the Order of Australia. Our congratulations to them all, and to all the other Territorians awarded outside the Order, and to all who have been so honoured.

Member of the Order of Australia (AM) General List

Mrs Susanne Frances Bradley of Darwin
The Honourable Frederick Arthur Finch of Virginia
Mrs Gwen Livingstone Tremlett of Moulden
Mr Lance John Tremlett of Moulden

Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) General List

Mrs Pauline Feehan of Nightcliff
Dr Charles William Butcher of Alice Springs
Associate Professor Martin Bernard Jarvis of Darwin
Miss Virginia Mary Mitchell of Alice Springs
Mr Glenn Richard Norris of Noonamah

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Chairman's Page

Best wishes to all members for 2007. As always January seemed to disappear in a haze of relaxation, recovering from Christmas festivities, welcoming in the New Year and enjoying the wild storms and rain that come with the monsoon season. February signals that life and work are back to normal and the pattern of daily life has already resumed. I hope 2007 is an interesting and healthy year for you.

Congratulations to the NT Order of Australia recipients announced on Australia Day. Letters of congratulation have been sent to them from the National President and me with an invitation for them to join the Association. I look forward to their response and hope they decide to join our NT Branch.

The Annual General Meeting and Christmas Dinner was a great night with many lingering on well after formalities were over. Dr. Neil Conn was guest speaker at the dinner and spoke of his experiences and aims for the Association during his two year term as National President. Members from all States and Territories appreciate the enormous contribution he and his wife Lesley have made to the Association during his term in office.

The election of the Committee was dealt with swiftly and efficiently by Returning Officer Austin Asche AC. The past committee was re-elected except for Kath Phelan who retired: Maisie Austin was welcomed as the new member. Once again no nominations were received for Secretary and I would really welcome a volunteer to fill the gap this year. The Committee meets on alternate months on the fourth Tuesday from 5pm to 6pm at my home. The next meeting will be held on March 27th 2007.

A notable and interesting invitation was received in January from the Darwin City Council to attend a ceremony to confer the title of "Honorary Freeman of the City of Darwin" on one of our most esteemed members, the Hon Austin Asche AC, QC. Many of our members are long time Territorians and friends of Austin and we felt proud and honoured to be present on this special occasion. Congratulations Austin. There have only been four other Freemen of Darwin – Dr Ella Stack and the late Alec Fong Lim (Lord Mayors), the late Commodore Johnstone (Administrator) and Rolf Harris. Whatever the Freedom means in modern times, in ancient English law it meant he could not be arrested if drunk and disorderly in the street.

I attended the 65th Anniversary of the "Bombing of Darwin" on 19th February at the Cenotaph. In lieu of flowers a book was presented which will be given to the Nightcliff High School. This is always a significant occasion for me as I was evacuated from Darwin on one of the last ships to leave.

Earl and I are looking forward to the 21st National OOA Association Conference in Sydney from 22nd to 25th February. Gavin Carpenter from Alice Springs will represent the Southern Regional Group. I will keep you posted about it in the next *Newsletter*.

Until then best wishes,

Wendy James OAM
NT Chairman

DEAR DIARY



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| 19 February 2007 | 65th Anniversary of Bombing of Darwin, book laying |
| 13 March 2007 | Function for Australia Day awardees – Invitation only. Committee function at Wendy's to meet new awardees – it is too difficult to get a suitable Wet Season venue for us all, so Wendy invites Australia Day awardees and partners, and committee and partners, to 16 Allen Street Fannie Bay, from 5.30 to 6pm |
| 25 April 2007 | Anzac Day, wreath or book laying , we hope at various locations, certainly at Darwin Cenotaph Dawn Service |
| 8 June 2007 | Friday before Queen's Birthday
Annual Branch Dinner Novotel, Darwin details TBC |
| Various dates | Mayoral Receptions TBA |
| 15 July 2007 | 3pm, Burnett House, Darwin – afternoon tea for members and partners to meet Queen's Birthday awardees and their partners |
| Various dates | Mayoral Receptions TBA |
| 16 November 2007 | Annual General Meeting and Dinner , Darwin, details TBC |

Chairman Wendy plans to visit Alice Springs and probably Katherine.

If a function is in **bold**, it is a definite goer (if the Lord's willing and the creeks don't rise). If it is in plain type or has TBA or TBC – to be announced or to be confirmed – then it is quite likely to happen but expect a change or two in the details. We wouldn't normally bore you with this but there doesn't seem to be much copy available.

Percy Ellis OAM

Percy Ellis died on 5 November 2006. He will be long remembered for his contributions to the Darwin Show and to NT Football. He was President of the Royal Agricultural Society of

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the NT from 1995 to 2004. and was a long time Australian Rules umpire. His OAM in 2000 was for his contribution to NT football and the Darwin Show Society. He was a district winner of the “Territorian of the Year” awards for the Darwin region in 1999. Percy and his wife Judy have regularly attended Branch functions. Our condolences go to Judy.

The Foundation

There was a small surplus from a couple of functions – the smaller and less formal the function, the better the surplus – and that has been donated to the Foundation. It seems the supply and distribution of bursaries will always be driven by the Big End of Town, but the branches and regional groups have a crucial role too in maintaining interest. Tasmanian groups are well known for their support. Your tax deductible donations plus branch surpluses may one day mean a Territory bursary. And if you think “Not in my lifetime”, give the Foundation a bequest.

The Order of Australia Association Foundation

“Helps deserving young Australians from all walks of life to achieve their potential”

HOW CAN YOU HELP THEM DO THIS?

Simple: Make a tax deductible donation to the Foundation

Contact: oaafoundation@theorderofaustralia.assn.au

OR write to The OAA Foundation Secretary
Old Parliament House King George Terrace
PARKES ACT 2600

The Order

There was some good stuff in the Summer edition of *The Order*, positive stuff a lot of it, not the grumpy outpourings that fill pages for want of readers’ contributions. We are rethinking our position on Thai elephants, although we are not convinced, and no doubt the stories about bursary holders have warmed the cockles of your hearts. If you put it to one side in the hurly-burly of Christmas, now is the time to retrieve it and read it.

The All-important Statistical Break-down of the Honours List

Nine is about the usual figure for the Territory. It is 12.5% better than eight, so is not to be sneezed at. Four were made Members of the Order (AM), and five receive the Medal (OAM). Five are men, four are women. Two women were made Members. Three are from Darwin and suburbs, and two each come from Alice Springs, Palmerston and the Darwin rural area. Two Members are husband and wife: while the Territory has seen couples awarded the OAM in the same list, we cannot remember a double AM. Most popular postcode (by the smallest margin) is 0830, thanks to the Tremletts living together, and four persons still have mail delivered to their homes. Four use post office boxes and one gets his mail at work, where he will also receive his *Newsletter*. South of Noonamah, north of the Charles River, is again a Black Hole. How many will join the Association? Is there a correlation between Branch



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vigour or Regional Group enthusiasm and new membership rates? Do members take for granted that the Association is a Good Thing? Has the Association a profile, and could it be lowered further?

Committee of 2007

Chairman and National Director

Wendy James OAM

Vice-Chairman

Kathleen Short OAM

SECRETARY

VACANT

Treasurer

Yogan Sathianathan OAM

Committee Members -

Dr Val Asche AM

Maisie Austin OAM

Rosemary Burkitt OAM

Dr David Cox AM

Jim Forwood AM

Alasdair McGregor OAM

Committee meets at 5.00 pm on 4th Tuesday of odd months at 16 Allen Street Fannie Bay: next meeting 27 March, then 22 May, 24 July, 25 September. **AGM Friday 16 November.**

Postal address Order of Australia Association, NT Branch
PO Box 2171
Parap NT 0804

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Secretary Vacant

The Branch needs a dedicated Secretary. That is, the Branch needs on its committee a person who will, as well as taking part in the ordinary decision making process, record minutes and attend to other secretarial functions: a person who is a member of the Association. Of course it *may* help if that person is dedicated to the cause, but it may not. Many a man has battled for The Cause, without the least idea what The Cause was!

Presently we are doing it tough. Val Asche has taken the first set of committee minutes for the year, but she is a busy person and cannot easily find time for that. You elected Val because of her various sterling qualities as a decision maker, not to take notes of amendments that may or may not become the motion, etc, etc. May be one of the other committee members will

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accept the position, but if you are willing and able – see the box for meeting times, and the Diary for what we may do this year – give Wendy a call.

Southern Regional Group

Mr Gavin Carpenter OAM

Mr Bern Kilgariff AM

Mrs Joan Higgins OAM

Mrs Susan Ride OAM

Gavin's ph (08) 8955 0177

National Conference

We know of six attending the Sydney Conference and AGM of the Association, Wendy and Earl James, Alasdair and Helen McGregor, and Gavin and Joan Carpenter. Gavin will be reporting to the regional groups meeting.

The Honours System Again

If anyone else criticizes the workings of the Honours System it is sour grapes. But as we are all in the system, as beneficiaries, ours is informed and constructive comment. The Summer edition of *The Order* has an interesting piece on nominating, by our National Secretary Jim Leedman AM. The main thrust of it runs counter to what some of us have been told. Many will know that the nomination form downloaded from the Government website itsanhonour.gov.au has provision for four nominees, while the form downloaded from the Association website, at least until recently, has provision for five. There was a view that our form was better, that five referees were better than four. Now Jim is saying that three or four is ample, and that the more referees the greater is the likelihood of a wrong'un. We understand that some who actively engage the system find it useful to hand pick the referees in advance, and submit their references with the nomination – this makes it easier all round and reduces the risk that the nominated one will be damned with faint praise.

Looking back over the last several years, it seems to some of us at best peculiar and at worst downright disgraceful, that some outstanding citizens who have undoubtedly deserved their awards bestowed by, for example and perhaps especially, the Australian of the Year system of the Australia Day Council, have not been awarded under our more “prestigious” system.* Now it may be that the Council of the Order looks at what has been done subsequent to the earlier award, in the same way as it does when considering a promotion from AM to AO. Or it may be that nominators simply tire of repeating the process. Or that those nominated get their backers off-side. Or that some faint praise gives the Council pause. One may suppose the second of these is most likely. Whatever the reason, what is to be done about it? And are we content to be by-passed by the Murdoch Pride of Australia medal?

Especially in the Territory, small populations and quotas mean there shall always be low numbers of recipients of AC, AO and AM. But there is no formal quota system in place for OAM. Of course the Council is open to criticism if it appears to be too liberal. Remember the sledging the Poms got at the Ashes series for their Imperial awards - 15 runs for an MBE. Did we think they should have returned them – shades of the Beatles? (It seemed to die down a bit during the One Day Internationals.) Graffiti urging “Free Nelson Mandela” were famously changed to “One Free Nelson Mandela in every packet of Cornflakes”), and the distribution of the OAM must have some bounds or it too will be ridiculed and devalued.

We are not asking yet for more medals. That will be when a large increase in quality nominations meets an undue failure rate. We must coordinate our efforts on both fronts.



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*But see in this issue “Percy Ellis OAM”: was he an exception to the rule?

AMcG

Mailing List

We are trying to get a more complete list of recipients living in the Northern Territory. The hardest to pick up move here from interstate or have awards in the Military List. If you know anyone like that you could do worse than put him or her in touch with us.

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