

THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION
QUEENSLAND BRANCH



ANNUAL REPORT

20 NOVEMBER 2009



Queensland Branch Chairman's Annual Report

20 November 2009

It is my honour to present the Thirtieth Annual Report of the Queensland Branch of The Order of Australia Association.

Vale

Firstly, it is with great sadness that we record the passing of a number of our members during the past year. Of significance among these are Thelma Rowatt OAM and Sir Bruce Watson AC.

Appreciation

The year under review has been successful, productive and busy. This outcome is directly attributable to the outstanding contribution of your State Branch Committee, Regional Convenors and Specialist Coordinators for the Secondary and Primary School Citizenship Awards. On behalf of our members, I extend a sincere thank you to this very special group of people.

Annual General Meeting November 2008

The Twenty-Ninth Annual General Meeting was held prior to the Annual Dinner on 21 November 2008, with 29 members signing to confirm their attendance.

The Office Bearers and Committee elected for the 2008-2009 year were:

Chairman	Mr Mick Davis AM
Vice Chairman	Mr Paul Sowa OAM
Immediate Past Chairman	Mrs Dina Browne AO
Honorary Secretary	Mr Ross Dwyer OAM
Honorary Treasurer	Mr Royce Voss OAM

Committee	Mr Philip Blakey OAM Air Vice Marshall Bill Collins AO (Retd) Mrs Jennette Lavis OAM, Mr Tony Stokes OAM, Mr Paul Stevenson OAM, Mrs Margaret Rankin AM Mr Raymond Young OAM
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Committee Members retiring at that AGM were Ms Fay Barker AM and Mrs Dorothy Campton OAM. Their contribution was duly commended.

On the occasion of this, the 2009 AGM, long-standing Committee member Jennette Lavis OAM is retiring to devote more time to her family. Jennette has been a significant contributor to the Queensland Branch Committee and all of its functions during her term of office. Jennette's quality photography has provided us with a rich source of pictures for our newsletter as well as providing a valuable pictorial record of all of the Queensland Branch functions since she first joined the Committee.

National Conference 2009

The 23rd Annual Conference of the OAA was held in Brisbane between 18-22 February 2009 with 222 registered attendees.

The Branch Committee doubled as the Conference Committee with all contributing significantly to the planning and delivery of the Conference and AGM events.

Q150 sponsorship from the Queensland Government and sponsorship from Graham Roberts OAM significantly complemented the Conference budget, as did the early and refundable “seed funding” from the National Board. The financial outcome was a small profit.

Pre-conference activities commenced on Wednesday 18 February 2009 with the “Sojourn in the Canefields”. Delegates travelled by coach to the historic Heck Family Homestead and sugarcane processing plant of member Bill Heck OAM and Pat Heck where they were briefed on the distinguishing features of these locations by Bill. May I formally acknowledge the support of Bill and Pat Heck, Government House Queensland, the Queensland Government, Brisbane City Council, Beenleigh Historical Village, Newstead House and The Gallery of Modern Art for hosting conference events. May I also acknowledge the support of the Queensland Police Pipes and Drums and Conference Orator, The Honourable Justice Margaret McMurdo AC and Conference Chairman Major-General Kevin Cooke AO RFD ED (Retd)

The highlight of the conference dinner was the presentation by Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AO, Governor of Queensland of The Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholarship Awards to three outstanding Australian youths.

- Rebecca Evans of Darwin, Northern Territory,
- James Hicks of Noorat, Victoria, and
- Jarrod Hodgson of Melbourne, Victoria

The Annual Dinner

The 2008 Annual Dinner was held at the Queensland Club on 21 November with 87 members and guests in attendance. Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AO Governor of Queensland and Mr Stewart McCosker were guests of Honour. Ms Sallyanne Atkinson AO, as the Occasional Speaker, gave a wonderful insight into Brisbane’s fine heritage.

Committee

The Branch Committee continued to meet each month. Until the business of the National Conference 2009 was finalised, meetings were held in the Board Room at OzAccomm. Thereafter, the meetings have been held at the Brisbane City Council Library at Reddacliffe Place. The Committee acknowledges the wonderful support of each of those hosts for so generously providing facilities for meetings. Committee members have all willingly contributed to the success of activities and thereby helped to ensure that our programs continue.

Honorary Secretary, Ross Dwyer OAM has again made a significant commitment to the role of Secretary since his election in November 2007, and has performed the

duties in exemplary fashion. We are indebted also to Royce Voss OAM for his careful and outstanding contribution as Honorary Treasurer of the Qld Branch. Ross and Royce have both agreed to stand for nomination for these roles again in 2010.

Award Functions

In 2008-09 we again honoured our commitment to the Student Citizenship Awards by successfully staging the Primary School Citizenship Awards and the Secondary School Student Citizenship Awards. In 2009, 14 students received the Award. On this occasion, the judges decided that the quality of submissions was so high that to award the normal 12 would be unfair.

Twelve Primary Schools were each granted the Award for their school-based projects fostering good citizenship among students. These Awards were presented on Monday 19th October 2009. Approximately 100 guests attended the presentation ceremony. We gratefully acknowledge Dorothy Campton OAM for the concept and Peter Blatch OAM for again expertly convening these Primary School Awards with the help of our Honorary Secretary and our State Branch Committee.

Private and state secondary schools nominated eighty two (82) Year 12 students across Queensland for the 2009 Secondary School Student Citizenship Awards. The panel of Judges, Ms Dina Browne AO, St Laurence's College teacher, Ms Sally Freney and Dr Bruce Cook, Retired Headmaster, The Southport School selected 14 of the most meritorious to receive the Gold Medallion and Certificate of Merit from Her Honour, Justice Margaret McMurdo AC, President of the Queensland Court of Appeal. The presentation was held in the Old Legislative Council Chamber, Parliament House and was attended by over 100 guests, including teachers, parents, representatives from education authorities and government and members of the Association. Our sincere thanks go to Professor Klaus Bremhorst AM, Convenor of these Awards.

These two Student Citizenship Awards not only engender the value of the extensive community service performed by these young Australians, but also enhance awareness of the Order.

Photographer Jennette Lavis OAM provides each secondary student and primary school attending the presentation with a CD of photographs taken at the function. This has proved immensely popular with students and their families.

Inter-Faith Observance

Due to the Inter-Faith Observance as a significant event on the Association's National Conference 2009 Agenda in February, the 2009 Inter-Faith Observance was not held.

Receptions for new Recipients

Two receptions were held for new recipients of Honours in the Order of Australia. In May, 130 guests attended a function at the Qld Parliamentary Annexe to honour the recipients of the 2009 Australia Day Honours. In September, recipients of the Queen's Birthday Honours were guests at a reception at the Parliamentary Annexe. Some 120 guests attended including many members of the Association.

At each reception, the new recipients were provided with information about the Association and Branch activities.

Morning Teas

The morning teas held at the United Service Club continue to be an attraction for many members who prefer daytime activities. Members are updated on the development of the Branch and the Association and an interesting guest speaker adds to the occasion. In the past these functions have been organised by the late Thelma Rowatt OAM and supported by Jim Rogers-Rudnik CV OAM CMC ICC. Thelma will be sadly missed by the regular morning tea attendees.

The Branch Bulletin

The importance of the newsletter as the conduit for information for Queensland members is evident by the positive comments from members. During the past year as Editor, Margaret Rankin AM has produced the Bulletin to include all items deemed to be of interest to the membership. The active contribution and involvement of members is welcome especially with appropriate articles and contributions. The Bulletin still comes out 3 times a year. I extend our sincere appreciation to Margaret for her outstanding efforts in this regard. Our Secretary Ross Dwyer OAM is also closely involved through final proof-reading and distribution of the Branch Newsletter.

Regional Groups

The Convenors of the Regional Groups are very committed to providing members with enjoyable social occasions and to promoting an understanding of the Order and the Association objectives. Regional functions enjoy considerable local publicity which in turn enhances public knowledge of the Australian Honours system.

The Darling Downs Group had a very enjoyable and well-attended morning tea in May, followed by a highly successful luncheon in October organised by Convenor Paul McNally OAM and his committee.

The Gold Coast also held their Lunch Function in May 09, with an interesting speaker. In October, an elegant garden party was again held at the residence of Mr John Kearney AM QC and Mrs Kearney. Our sincere appreciation goes to the Gold Coast Convenor AVM Bill Collins AO (Retd) and his committee for these very successful functions.

Malcolm McDonald OAM continues to organise the Sunshine Coast activities and Kevin Gould OAM and his committee arranged two social gatherings for members in the Bundaberg Region, to which members came from far and wide. Of note was the attendance of special guest Todd Russell, survivor of the Beaconsfield mining tragedy, at the Bundaberg lunch. In Rockhampton, Ray Young OAM convened functions in March and September. The Branch is indebted to our Convenors in these regions for their commitment and enthusiasm.

The Townsville Annual Dinner was held in September under the expert guidance of Convenor Neil Weekes AM MC and the local committee and once again it was a very enjoyable function and a great success. The Guest Speaker gave a very interesting

presentation, which was well received by all. Cairns also held their annual luncheon in November under the guidance of Convenor Deirdre Ford AM. The Guest Speaker at this function was Barry Jiggins OAM founder of MongoliAid International Inc.

My fellow Committee members and I have had the pleasure of attending most of the regional functions during the year and will ensure that on-going and tangible support from the State Branch Committee makes the job of keeping the Regional Groups vibrant and meaningful somewhat easier. As the number of Association members outside of South East Queensland increases each year, the Regional Groups play a vital role in meeting the needs of the wider membership. The Branch Committee warmly acknowledges the contribution made by the Convenors and all committee members.

Branch Activity at National Level

I attended the National Committee meetings which were held in Brisbane in February and in Sydney in September. Dina Browne AO, as National Chairman, has attended Executive sub-committee meetings. Reports have been made back to the Queensland committee and a précis of the issues appear in the Chairman's Report in the Bulletin. Both Dina and I will be at the AGM in Adelaide in February 2010 and will report to the Committee thereafter.

The 2008-09 year has been a demanding year for our Branch Committee with the National Conference adding to their busy workload as volunteers. It is in this context that again we have been able to successfully achieve our goals for the year and continue to promote the Association. Most importantly, we have dedicated significant time to ensuring the success of the 2009 Order of Australia Association 2009 National Conference here in Brisbane in February.

May I again acknowledge the contribution of Kevin Cooke AO, who guided the Conference in delivery, Des Power AM who served as Conference Chair for almost a year and had to resign due to international commitments at the time of the Conference. I pay a special tribute to Christine Bryant and Rochelle Manderson who also contributed a great deal of time in assisting the Committee plan and deliver the highly successful 2009 National Conference.

I have again found the role of Branch Chairman rewarding and extremely challenging and Dina Browne AO has provided wonderful support for the Queensland Branch as National Chairman. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with a most efficient and dedicated Committee who have all contributed to the running of the Branch with their wisdom and enthusiasm – each brings a number of very special skills.

As we look to a viable and very active future for our State Branch Committee, we seek your continuing support and participation in our Association over the forthcoming year.

Mick Davis AM
Chairman
Queensland Branch
20 November 2009