

THE ORDER



The National Magazine of The Order of Australia Association
No 18, Summer 2005–2006

Laughter is obviously the best medicine



Smile! Say cheese! No need for such instructions to this group. Ten recipients of South Australian Branch Student Citizenship Awards received medallions and certificates recently at a reception at Government House, Adelaide. Her Excellency Marjorie Jackson-Nelson, AC CVO MBE, Governor of South Australia and Branch Patron, presented the medallions and described awardees as “these wonderful young people”. Mrs Elaine Bussenschutt OAM, Branch Committee member and former Branch Secretary, presented certificates. Picture shows recipients with Her Excellency and Branch Chairman Mr Bryce Saint OAM

Young people
shine
in
Queensland

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mentors do
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does it help?

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at the start

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Young citizens shine

One of the many activities of The Order of Australia Association in all states and territories is its members' involvement with young Australians.

The Order of Australia Association Student Citizenship Awards were inaugurated in 1999 to foster pride in Australian citizenship.

They are presented to those Queensland students who have demonstrated outstanding service to their schools and to their communities.

The judges of this year's Queensland awards were Ms Sally Freney, Dr Jim Crocker AM and Mr Owen Sturgess AM.

In September, the Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, presented the Queensland Branch's Student Citizenship Awards to Amanda Acutt, of Girls' Grammar School, Rockhampton; Matthew Crossley, of Proserpine State High School; Sarah Fleming, of Nanango State High School; Aden Gutman, of Kelvin Grove State College; Sophia Hamblin-Wang, of Innisfail State High School; Alice McDownell, of Brisbane State High School; Christy Mellifont, of St Rita's College, Clayfield; Patrick Peacock, of Smithfield State High School, North Queensland; Alison Ryan, of Pimlico State High School; Alice Ryder, of William Ross State High School, Aitkenvale; and Laura Warboys, of St



Her Excellency the Governor of Queensland, Ms Quentin Bryce AC, with students from all over Queensland who received Citizenship Awards at a special function in September.

George State High School.

Community Service Certificates were presented to Laura Allen, Naomi Clancy, Bonnie Davis, Alan Hewson, Eloise Keeffe, Rebecca King, Brian Luckins,

Andrew Nguyen, James Penrose, Felicity Savage and Eleanor Tait.

The ceremony was held at the Old Legislative Council chamber, Parliament House, Brisbane



The Darling Downs Region hosted a successful "Dining on the Downs" weekend in October. The coordinator of the Darling Downs Region, Professor Paul McNally OAM, and his wife, Margaret, are seen here at the dinner held in the beautifully restored Church Theatre, which forms part of the redeveloped Empire Theatre complex in Toowoomba.

Dining on the Downs



Lesley Conn AM catches up with Audrey Kennon OAM at afternoon tea at National Trust property Burnett House on a private visit to Darwin in July.

Last call for national conference

Former chairman of the WA Branch David Wilcox AM, who is Chairman of the Committee preparing for the Association's 2006 National Conference, in Perth from February 16 to 19, says the conference has an interesting

and innovative program. Highlights include the dinner in the magnificent University of Western Australia, a reception in the refurbished Perth Town Hall, and a luncheon cruise on the Swan River. If you still have to register, please hurry.

Just what does a mentor do?

The Order of Australia Association Foundation awards prizes to deserving young Australians in post secondary vocational training. But there's much more to the Foundation's prize than cash. Each prizewinner is introduced to a mentor — a leader in the awardee's chosen field of study who is there to offer advice. Here a mentor and an award winner share their experiences.

Professor John Yu AC is Chancellor of the University of New South Wales and was Chief Executive of the Westmead Children's Hospital from 1978 to 1997. He was mentor to a prizewinner, medical student Natalie Rainger.

Today, more young Australians are venturing into professional and vocational studies that their families would never have dreamed possible. This trend is confirmed by the number of new students who come from families in which no-one had studied before beyond school — and the figure is greater in regional universities and in the newer universities.

There is great value in having someone to talk to who has travelled the journey upon which you are about to embark; even better if there can be a sense of friendship and trust between the two partners in the exercise.

I have grown up and lived my life in big cities; Sydney and London provided my medical education and professional training. Teaching hospitals and universities have dominated my experiences.

That was the journey I could share with Natalie Rainger, a young woman from rural NSW, about to enter her last year in the Graduate Medical Program of Sydney University. My advice, however, was tempered by her interest in surgery and my life as a paediatric physician.

Recently her planned elective term in Vietnam and Cambodia allowed me to provide what would be, I hope, more useful comments about what she might find but also some everyday practical hints about travelling around this part of our region, which I know well.

As we talked recently, we agreed that frequent contact was not always necessary; what was important was my being available in the event that she needed to consult or needed help.

I guess mentoring is about providing needed support when that is sought and not intruding into another's life with unwanted advice. It is about helping Natalie, not helping me!

John Yu



Melissa Bowtell and her mentor, Dr Cherrell Hirst.

..and how does advice help?

Melissa Bowtell is a 2005 bursary winner and is studying for the degree of Bachelor of Occupational Therapy.

She writes:

The scholarship has allowed me to live at International House, which is a college only five minutes' walk from the University of Queensland where I study.

The convenient distance is particularly beneficial because I cannot afford a car. The college is also the ideal place to live and study, with a unique atmosphere: 50 per cent of the 240 residents are Australian students and 50 per cent are international students, and the college fosters internationalism, peace and understanding.

This year I have been able to afford the latest text books, a computer and a printer to support my study. I can proudly say that the Order of Australia Association Foundation bursary has assisted me

in maintaining a grade point average of 6 (Distinction) in my Bachelor of Occupational Therapy.

I have also appreciated being part of the OAAF Mentor Program. My mentor, Dr Cherrell Hirst AO, has been a great source of inspiration, encouragement and guidance during the year. Dr Hirst has shared with me many of her experiences as a student and a health-care professional, which has motivated me to explore a variety of possibilities for my professional future.

At the moment I am particularly interested in aged care and mental health and am awaiting confirmation of holiday employment in an aged-care facility.

During the year I was also successful in balancing my university study with various social, sporting and community-service activities. In 2005 I was Secretary to the International House Student Club Inc. The club is responsible for all the social, sporting, cultural and community-service activities at college, including Soiree, which is the largest multicultural festival at the University of Queensland — it has had more than 3000 visitors in one day. Recently I received the President's Award for service to the college community. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Order of Australia Association Foundation once again for its generosity and support, which has allowed me to excel to the best of my ability in my university study.

Melissa Bowtell

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Taking on Sir Humphrey

I was very disappointed at a recent Queen's Birthday investiture to find that, after all the good work by Sir Charles Court AK KCMG OBE and the valiant efforts of the late Commodore Peter James AM, a former National President of the Order of Australia Association, and the National Secretary in the 1990s, we were back to the "bad old days" of elitist medals intruding into the body corporate of the Order of Australia.

It has long been recognised that the original intrusion of the Public Service Medal into the Order of Australia ahead of its own medal — the OAM — was a piece of "Sir Humphreyism" that defied logic but which was politically astute at that time. The basic tenets/planks of the Order of Australia are that *every* Australian is eligible and *every* Australian can nominate another Australian for recognition.

Previously it was the role of the Public Service to put forward names for the Imperial Honours — and it was a fairly well-cut and dried process. "Ordinary" Australians were not easily recognised.

When the Order of Australia was established in 1975, "Sir Humphrey" used the *perceived* status of the Public Service Medal in the Imperial Honours system to claim its new position ahead of the OAM. This is despite the fact that: The status of any Australian honour took precedence over other honours (for example an AM preceded an MBE); and The PSM was elitist — it was neither available to *all* Australians nor could *all* Australians nominate another for recognition.

**By Mollie Dinham OAM
Mt Pleasant WA**

It is the greatest piece of illogic in the Constitution, Act or whatever.

The fact that this piece of illogic has remained for 30 years only underlines the unwillingness of any politician to address the issue. They dare not challenge "Sir Humphrey".

It is all very well for the Prime Minister to say that all these elitist medals are incorporated into the Australian system of Awards. It is *how* they are incorporated that is at fault.

The Order of Australia is a system of honours — at various levels. The elitist medals can be incorporated as part of the Australian system of Awards — but only *after* all levels of the body corporate of the Order of Australia.

There is no gainsaying that those awarded the elitist medals are worthy of the awards. Hence all the more reason for the names of such people to be put forward to the Order of Australia Council for consideration — as is possible for every other Australian; and I notice that this has happened in some cases.

However, as Sir Charles predicted, the initial intrusion of the PSM has led to a plethora of other elitist medals now claiming precedence over the OAM. These include medals for fire fighters, emergency workers and so on.

This piece of nonsense, in my view, devalues the status of all levels of the Order of Australia because it can't keep to the rules — its basic tenets — and I find this view shared by other members

of the Order of Australia as well as being expressed by families of the awardees.

It also presents a further issue: whereas the precedence of the PSM over the OAM was written into the regulations, this was not the case with the *later* Australian medals. Did they just "ride in on the coattails" of the PSM? In which case they have no status ahead of the Order's own medal.

For that matter, the PSM is only in its present position because of Public Service manipulations which, ironically, drew on the Imperial system, to claim a position outside all tenets of the Order of Australia, a Society of Honour.

So in reality it is for the Association at both national and state levels to work with those at Government House, given the task of arranging the program of the investitures.

Together with others of like mind, I see it as a responsibility of the Association to ensure that future investitures follow the order, inaugurated in Canberra and taken up by the States in the 1990s — the Order of Australia first, followed by other Australian awards (elitist medals).

As a postscript, as national editor of *AIRNEWS* in the 1980s I had to be particularly careful with pre- and postnominals. When I inquired of Government House (or it could have been the Order of Australia Council) the order of such postnominals as MBE and AM, I was instructed that *any* of the Australian honours came ahead of imperial and other honours. However in the catalogue at the recent investiture I noticed this order had not been followed.

Something else for the Association to keep its eye on?

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NSW: Regional Groups

Central Coast, Illawarra, Mid North Coast, Shoalhaven. **District sub-groups:** Blue Mountains, Cent. West, Hunter, Northern Tablelands, Orange, Southern Highlands, Southern Tablelands

Queensland Regional Groups

Gold Coast, Toowoomba, Sunshine Coast, Bundaberg, Townsville, Far North Queensland & Torres Strait Islands Group, Rockhampton

South Australia

Barossa Valley, Fleurieu Peninsula

Tasmania Regional Groups North-Western, Northern, Southern

Victoria Regional Groups

Barwon, Cent. H'lands, Goulburn Valley & North East, Loddon Campaspe, Gippsland, Mornington Peninsula, Eastern Suburbs.

Western Australia Regional Groups

Great Southern (Albany), Lower South West (Bunbury)

In the beginning — skulduggery

On February 14, 1975, Her Majesty signed the Letters Patent and the Australian honours system came into being. All that was needed was the staff to form the secretariat that would enable the then Governor-General, Sir John Kerr, to administer the Order, as laid down by its Constitution.

At that stage, out at Government House, we had no spare staff for a secretariat, and we certainly had no spare office accommodation or office equipment; and so it was that the head of the Department of the Special Minister of State called on the Governor-General and offered to take all these problems off his hands.

The Department had spare officers it could make available; it even had spare office accommodation for them in the Department and, most importantly, it had a senior officer whom the Governor-General could appoint to be the Secretary of the Order.

It was an ideal solution so far as the Governor-General's office was concerned but it would have been a disaster for the Order. Mr Whitlam [then Prime Minister] had told the nation already that the Order would be free of political interference and that having the Governor-General responsible for its administration would ensure this, yet here was a proposal that would have placed the day-to-day administration in a Government department, in the hands of public servants answerable to their departmental head and their minister.

Fortunately Sir John Kerr knew how he intended to discharge his responsibilities as Chancellor of the Order. As Official Secretary to the Governor-General, I was appointed Secretary of the Order. We set about recruiting staff, we converted disused cottages and other outbuildings at Government House into offices and store rooms and we borrowed office furniture and office equipment from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Hard going but important

It was hard going but it was important that the Governor-General be seen to be in control of the new honours system, that the Council be seen to be independent and that the secretariat be seen to be free of ministerial and departmental influence.

By standing firm when it would have been so easy to give in, we established the Order and its administration at Government House, thus hastening public acceptance of it and of its basis of appointment on merit, independently assessed.

Soon after Sir Ninian Stephen became Governor-General and Chancellor in July 1982, a government advisory body reported to Parliament and to the Prime Minister on the inadequacies

Relevant to the article on Page 4, these are extracts from "The Order of Australia: In the Beginning", an address by Sir David Smith KVO AO to The Order of Australia Association, ACT Branch, on October 19, 2004.

of Government House. Quick as a flash the bureaucracy recommended to Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser that our problems at Government House would be solved if the Honours Secretariat were taken over and accommodated in one of the departments — a good try; but it failed too.

Sir Ninian responded by pointing out that relocating the secretariat, which, as I mentioned earlier, was accommodated away from the main building, would do nothing to solve the problems in Government House itself.

More importantly, from the point of view of the Order, the Governor-General went on to say that, even if the offer would have solved any of our accommodation problems, he could not have accepted it because he believed that his responsibilities as Chancellor required that the secretariat remain at Government House.

After the 1983 elections, the new Labor Government commenced a review of the Australian honours system, principally with a view to adding a range of new civilian awards, such as police and fire service medals, and skill-at-arms, operational and gallantry medals and awards for the Defence Force. The review was conducted under the auspices of the Department of Administrative Services, which had inherited responsibility for the Government's honours policy from the Department of the Special Minister of State.

Potential destruction

By 1984 the Department was ready with a whole range of recommendations for additional honours and awards in the Australian honours system, which were adopted in due course by Cabinet, approved by the Queen and announced by Prime Minister Hawke.

Tucked away in the Cabinet submission, in what was virtually a throw-away sentence, was a proposal which, I believe, would have destroyed the Order of Australia.

Aided and abetted by at least one state premier's department, and maybe more, who still chafed at the thought that their premiers had to put their nominations to the Council like every other Australian who wished to make a nomination, the Department of Administrative Services had proposed that 75 per cent of the awards in the Order of Australia be recommended to the Governor-General henceforth by the Prime Minister and the state premiers, each of whom would have

his own quota allocations. The remaining 25 per cent would continue to be recommended to the Governor-General by the Council.

Their had been no previous consultation with Government House, as was required by the rules relating to the preparation of Cabinet submissions, nor were the implications of this startling proposal explained to Cabinet.

So Cabinet gave its approval in circumstances which indicated clearly that the significance of their decision had not been explained to, nor understood by, ministers. Still, understood or not, the damage to the integrity of the Order of Australia, so it seemed, had been done.

Now, had the Government decided to provide for the Prime Minister and premiers to make *all* recommendations to the Governor-General, as was the case with recommendations for British honours, the Governor-General's Office might not have liked it but we could not have objected.

After all, honours policy is a matter for the Government and it is always open to a prime minister to recommend to the Queen changes in the Constitution of the Order of Australia.

However, on this occasion we were facing not a complete reversal but only a partial reversal, of the Whitlam "hands off" policy.

Some General Division recommendations by the Council were to continue, as were the Military Division recommendations by the Minister for Defence, advised by his service committees, but the vast majority of the recommendations in the General Division would have been made by the Prime Minister and the Premiers and they in turn would have had to re-establish their own departmental honours secretariats, as had existed when they were making recommendations for British honours.

Neither the general public nor the recipients themselves would have known by which method they had been recommended and the special quality of an award in the Order would have been diminished, if not lost entirely.

Moreover, the Chancellor would have continued to have responsibility for matters that were no longer entirely under his control.

As for the Council, once governments had come to play decisive roles in making a substantial proportion of the awards, the whole purpose of having an independent Council would have been negated.

Well, the good news is that in due course Cabinet rescinded its decision; the Prime Minister and state premiers were not given their own honours quotas and the Order continued to be administered by the Governor-General and his staff, free of ministerial and departmental control, all recommendations continuing to be made by an independent Council.

South Australia celebrates

25 years of friendship and service remembered with affection

The South Australian Branch of the Association has celebrated its 25th anniversary with special events and retrospectives.

Her Excellency Marjorie Jackson-Nelson, AC CVO MBE, Governor of South Australia and Patron of the branch, hosted a lunch at Government House for founding members and past and present chairmen.

Branch Chairman Mr Bryce Saint OAM presented Her Excellency with an inscribed Association plaque to commemorate the anniversary (see top photograph).

More than 100 members and guests attended a reception at the National Trust property Carrick Hill.

The President of Friends of Carrick Hill, Mrs Margaret Denton OAM, welcomed guests, Lieutenant Governor Mr Bruno Krumins AM proposed the Loyal Toast and Branch Chairman Mr Bryce Saint OAM proposed the toast to the Association.

Among the guests was Founding Chairman, Mr Lindsay Bowes AM.



Above: Three guests at SA Branch's 25th anniversary reception: from left, Dr Tony Shinkfield AO, Branch Chairman Mr Bryce Saint OAM and the President of the SA OBE Association, Colonel Ray Stanley AM OBE RFD ED.



Left: The Governor of South Australia, Her Excellency Marjorie Jackson-Nelson AC CVO MBE, with founding members and present and past chairmen at the SA Branch's 25th anniversary lunch at Government House, Adelaide.

Interfaith Service bridges cultures

As increasing numbers of Australians — and members of our Association — come from non-Christian backgrounds, the ACT Branch has sought ways to make its annual service more inclusive.

Despite enthusiastic support by lay members of the local Islamic community, it proved impractical to overcome some procedural issues in the short planning time that was available. Subsequently it was agreed to co-host the service with the ACT Baha’i Community in the Canberra Baha’i Centre.

The aim was to conduct a balanced celebration of life, joining major faiths in the service.

With a theme of “harmony and understanding” the service consisted of readings and prayers from the writings of the participating faiths.

There were readings or prayers by representatives of the Baha’i, Jewish, Hindu, Zoroastrian, Christian, Muslim and Buddhist faiths. The Canberra Grammar Junior School Chorale provided choral works and a sung blessing at the end of the Service.

An innovative and quite inspirational dramatic presentation entitled *One World* was made by two boys of the Baha’i Community, based on the idea of the installation of a computer game having problems with viruses that had to be eliminated — “intolerance” and “ignorance” — so “understanding” and “harmony” could function.

...

Members of the ACT branch of the Order of Australia Association have been challenged in an August lunch address by the Australian of the Year, Dr Fiona Wood AM, to raise funds for a synchrotron at Monash University.

The scientific project requires \$20 million to be raised for the acquisition of a synchrotron, to be used in the observation and investigation of the molecular structure of objects.



Those attending the ACT Branch’s Interfaith Service, (L to R): Mr Russ Richards OAM, Dr Ray Newcombe OAM, Ms Tessa Scrine, Executive Officer Baha’i ACT, Ms Shephalialie Williams, Baha’i ACT, Mr Bruce Sinclair AM, Mr Sam Wong OAM, Colonel (Retd) Roger Dace AM QGM.



At the NSW jubilee dinner in the NSW Parliament House in June, National Chairman Neil Conn AO, left, thanks NSW Branch’s Immediate Past Chairman, Rev. Dr Douglas Parker OAM, for his service to the Association.



Guests enjoy the atmosphere of the NSW Branch’s annual dinner in June.



Have you applied for your official Order of Australia Association plaque? See the rear of the address sheet of *The Order* for more details and the order form. The sale of this plaque assists the Order of Australia Association Foundation’s fund-raising.

Honours are a family affair in NT

The incoming Chairman, Order of Australia Association, Northern Territory Branch, is Mrs Wendy James OAM — one of four members of her family to have received honours.

Wendy James was born in Western Australia in 1935 and moved with her parents, Stan and Poppy Secrett, to live in Darwin in the late 1930s. Their idyllic lifestyle was disrupted when World War II came to Darwin and she was evacuated with her mother, brother and sister by sea back to WA.

The family returned to Darwin in October 1945 to rejoin Stan and to pick up their lives again in the town they called home. Wendy has lived in various parts of the Northern Territory ever since.

Wendy is married and has four sons, three of whom live in Darwin with their families. She is proud of the fact that her grandchildren are fourth-generation territorians.

She is one of four members of her



Mrs Wendy James OAM

family who have received recognition for their service and contributions to the community of the Northern Territory.

Wendy was awarded the Medal of the

Order of Australia on October 6, 1998 for service to the community through the promotion of women's issues in the NT.

Her husband Earl was made a Member of the Order of Australia on June 6, 1994 for services to the profession of surveying, to local government and to the community.

Her son, Alan, was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia on May 6 2005 for service to the arts, particularly through the promotion of indigenous music and culture.

In addition, her mother-in-law, Mrs Pearl James, was made a Member of the British Empire in 1969 for outstanding service to the Country Women's Association in the Northern Territory.

Wendy is still active in the community and is looking forward to meeting members of the Association and to promoting the organisation to new medal awardees in the NT during her term as chairman.

New faces but old hands at OAA in WA

Mr David Wilcox AM, who had been an outstanding Chairman of the Western Australian Branch, handed the reins to Colonel Rod Willox AM but will continue as chairman of the Committee preparing for the forthcoming Conference in Perth. The Honorary Secretary has resigned, to be replaced by Mr Clive Robartson OAM. Mrs Bridget Faye and Mr Denis Glennon AO have retired. Mrs Faye will continue on the Conference Committee. Incoming Committee Members are Dr Patricia Kailis AM and Mrs Gwen Roderick.

The incoming Chairman, Colonel Rodney Willox AM RFD ED JP, is a life member of the Association who holds degrees in Science (pathology) from the University of Western Australia and Medical Science (microbiology and biochemistry) from Curtin University (WA). He also has a Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety Management.

Colonel Willox is Chairman of the Australia Day Council of Western Australia and Deputy Chairman of the Swan River Trust and the Murdoch University Research Board.

He is also a Board Member of the Water and Rivers Commission.

Born in Warrnambool, Victoria, Rod Willox was educated in Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth.

He was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for his services to local government, the environment and the community.

The incoming Honorary Secretary, Mr Clive Robartson OAM, was born in Fremantle, WA and attended Curtin University, graduating with an Applied Science degree. He joined the Department

of Agriculture in 1964 and remained there for 40 years, enjoying roles in plant pathology, electron microscopy and, finally, in administration, as manager of the Animal Health Laboratories.

He served in the Army in 1968–70, which included time in South Vietnam with 8th Field Ambulance and 1st Australian Field Hospital.

In 1982 he was elected a councillor of the City of Melville. In 2002 he was elected President of the WA Local Government Association.

Clive has represented WA as a director of the Australian Local Government Association, the Australian Landcare Council, Gene Technology Community Consultative Committee, Chairman and member of the Municipal Waste Advisory Council, member of the State Waste Management Board and the Swan Catchment Council.

In 1994 he was elected Chairman of the Southern Metropolitan Regional Council, a position he held for 10 years.

Awarded an OAM in 1999 for service to local government and the community, he received the Centenary Medal in 2003.

He is a Rotary International Paul Harris Fellow.

THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION MERCHANDISE



Please FORWARD ME:

- Tie(s) @ \$35 + \$1 postage
- Scarf(ves) (Polyester Twill) @ \$27.50 + \$1 postage
- Scarf(ves) (Polyester Chiffon) @ 27.50 + \$1 postage
- Pen(s) @ \$10 + \$1 postage

My cheque is attached; or
 charge my Visa Mastercard Bankcard
 Card Number

Expiry Date

Name on Card

Signature

My full mailing address is.....

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Fax or mail your order to:
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REMINDER – MEMBERS ONLY MAY WEAR TIES AND SCARVES

Seeking ideas for the future

By Neil Conn AO, National Chairman

So far this year I have visited and addressed branch events in New South Wales, the Northern Territory, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and Queensland.

Each event was different but equally rewarding in the way I was received and listened to by members.

A number welcomed the opportunity to set out branch and personal views on what the Association was, and on occasions was not, doing.

In 2006 I plan to meet and address our members in Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria.

I expect that by the time I have completed the round of national visits I will have a clearer idea of what our members expect of our Association, and where it might improve its response to those needs.

Your messages are being conveyed through the Executive Committee to our National Board, which has established two small subcommittees to report to it in the New Year on:

The future direction of the Association, with emphasis on what should be its aims, goals and purposes, on members' needs and how the Association can best discharge its responsibilities and mission; and

How the Association might improve its over-all image and attractiveness to potential members, with a view to reversing what appears to be a declining trend in membership applications.

This issue of *The Order* contains a questionnaire that is designed to determine your ideas on those absolutely fundamental issues. I do not imagine that this is the first time many of you have been asked such questions.

Nor do I expect that it will be the last, since it is essential for the vitality of an organisation like ours that it revisits its targets regularly and assesses whether it's hitting them or not.

I urge you to take the few minutes required to respond to the questionnaire.

As National Chairman I am particularly interested in your views on the activities towards which we should channel our collective energy and expertise, and in



Queensland Branch members support the Foundation. At the Branch Annual Dinner, Phyllis Gray OAM presented a cheque to the National Chairman, Dr Neil Conn AO, representing funds raised at functions run by the Darling Downs (\$1000) and Gold Coast (\$500) regions and by Brisbane members (\$2000).

particular where you see the Association's Foundation fitting in.

In that regard, I can report that I have accepted an invitation from the Foundation's Chairman, Mr Hugh Morgan AC, to join the Foundation Board, and that the Foundation Secretary, Adjunct Professor Brian O'Keeffe AO, has accepted a standing invitation to attend all Executive Committee and National Committee Meetings as an observer.

I have been reminded by a number of you that the Foundation is but one mechanism by which we can, potentially, utilise the expertise, experience and networks residing in our 8,000 members.

Other suggestions include:

- A broader spread of the mentoring function but without the financial responsibilities assumed by the Foundation.
- A national symposium every few years

- on a matter of broad national interest;
- A sharpening of the focus of our Annual National Conference on to a theme of national significance.

These possibilities are being considered at present by your National Committee and I hope to report progress to you during 2006.

One aspect of our Association's activities will not change, however.

That is the social gathering that enables us to refresh long friendships and to make new ones amongst our fellow awardees in the Order of Australia.

Whether this is organised at a national, state, territory or regional level, it is essential to keeping our Association functioning as an entity that can choose, if it so decides, to do other things that foster pride in Australia and its achievers.

Lesley and I wish all of you and your families a Merry Christmas 2005 and a very safe and happy 2006.

An odyssey through more refined corridors of power

There was a time when every office and many homes had a copy of their relevant State Year Book or the Commonwealth Year Book — or both. This was not, primarily, because they were rivetting reading but they were essential reference books for a host of state and Commonwealth facts and figures.

Henry Speagle OAM was a year book editor with a difference. He made the *Victorian Year Book* a "must have", not only for its statistics but for its articles

on a range of topics. He was editor from 1958 to 1983. However, the availability of increasing sources of immediate information on the Internet made year books obsolete in the eyes of their publishers. The *Victorian Year Book* ceased publication in 2002, leaving the field to printed versions of the *NSW Year Book* and the *Commonwealth Year Book*.

Henry Speagle has now told his story in *Editor's Odyssey: A Reminiscence of Civil Service 1945 to 1985*. [ISBN 0

9751680 3 7 published by Haddington Press, Melbourne.]

This autobiography is more about the many and varied people he met than about the author himself.

The public service in both Commonwealth and state areas has changed much since Henry Speagle's day. It is now, arguably, more politically influenced. The Speagle odyssey recalls a time when advice was more independent and fearless.

Links with Thailand

Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Trade Tim Fischer AC

will head the establishment in June of an Australia-Thailand Institute. The institute has been founded to further promote Australia's relationship and expand institutional, cultural and people-to-people links.

Mr Fischer has long-standing associations and contacts in Thailand and his knowledge and leadership will be major assets as the Institute develops its work program.

The institute's objectives include implementing the treaty-level Agreement on Bilateral Cooperation, which identifies possible cooperation in science and technology, public-sector reform, education and the environment.

Other objectives will be to promote the Thailand-Australia Free Trade Agreement (TAFTA), which came into force in January, and economic relations more broadly; develop professional networking and institutional links; encourage Australian community interest in Thailand and vice-versa; and promote increased knowledge of Australia's educational, scientific and technological capabilities.

It will also sponsor exchanges and foster institutional links across the public and private sectors, business, academia and the arts and civil society.

Other members of the Institute's Executive Committee will be Dr Violeeta Braach-Maksvytis, Director of CSIRO Global Development; Mr Mike Courtnall, President, Asian Building and Manufacturing Markets, of BlueScope Steel; Mr Doug Hall, Director of the Queensland Art Gallery; Mr Peter Hendy, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Ms Prue Holstein, Executive Director of the Asia Society; Professor Tony Milner, Dean of Asian Studies at the Australian National University; and Mr Sidney Myer, of the Myer Foundation.

The Institute's activities will be funded from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's budget. Funding will increase gradually to about \$500,000 in 2007–08 as work programs are developed.

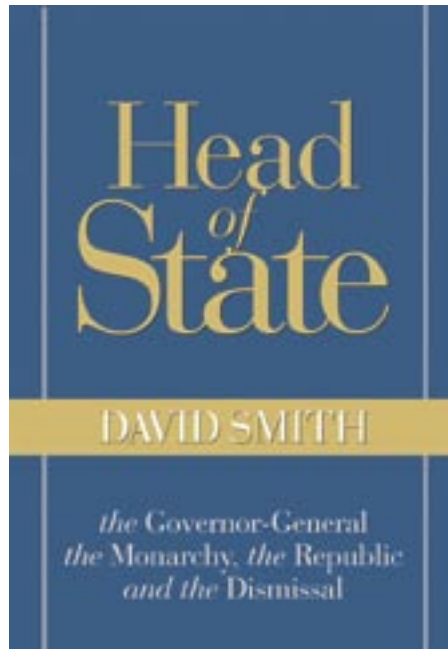
Replacing Order of Australia lapel pins

Members are reminded that the Association is *not permitted* to supply replacements for Order of Australia lapel pins. Nor is the Association able to replace lost or misplaced Order of Australia insignia. All requests for such items should be directed to:

**The Director of Honours
Honours Secretariat
Government House
CANBERRA ACT 2600**

People

New book sparks debate



Governor-General, not the Queen, is head of state, says author

Sir David Smith KCVO AO, Official Secretary to Governors-General from 1973 to 1990, Secretary of the Order of Australia 1975–1990 and a prolific commentator on the Australian Constitution, has written a new book, *Head of State — the Governor-General, the Monarchy, the Republic and the Dismissal*.

He is probably best known to the general public as the man who read the proclamation on the steps of Old Parliament House on November 11, 1975 but, to students of modern Australian political history, he is an authority on the place of the monarchy in Australian constitutional affairs.

In his book, Sir David argues that the drafters of the Australian Constitution made the Governor-General, not the Queen, Australia's head of state. This aspect of the debate over whether Australia should become a republic is one that will intrigue all Australians.

He attended a launching of his book in Canberra on December 7.

Legal appointments

Among 12 recent appointments of Federal and Family Court judges as presidential members of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, two are recipients of honours in the Order of Australia. Federal Court Justices **Annabelle Bennett AO** and **Roger Gyles AO** with the others have been appointed to the tribunal for five years.

Ready for anything

Mrs Emilie Wilson, of Rosebud, Victoria, received her award for services to the community, particularly through her work with the Country Women's Association of Victoria. She joined the Order of Australia Association earlier this year with the idea that she could contribute to its work. She says she is particularly interested in the Order of Australia Association Foundation's efforts to help young tertiary students. She wrote to National Chairman Dr Neil Conn AO, accepting the invitation to join the Association, "... but now, aged 90, I wonder what I still have to offer in return so I live on in faith. Maybe I can prove to be useful sometime to someone ... If I am to be ready to meet these new challenges it is time to be ... ready ..."

She has taken out life membership.

Workplace Relations

Andrew Robb AO MP was appointed Chairman of the Taskforce by the Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations in July in the run-up to the recent parliamentary debate on the new industrial relations laws.

Before entering Parliament, Mr Robb was a successful business adviser and previously held roles as Executive Director of the National Farmers' Federation and Federal Director of the Liberal Party of Australia.

International post

Judge Kevin Parker AO, of WA, has been appointed Vice-President of the International Criminal Tribunal of the former Yugoslavia in the Hague.

He was elected at an extraordinary plenary session of the permanent judges of the tribunal for a two-year term. He has been a member of the tribunal since December 2003.

On Reserve Bank board

Roger Corbett AM has been appointed to the board of the Reserve Bank on the resignation of **Robert Gerard AO**. Mr Corbett was to have taken up his position on December 9 on the expiry of the term of **Frank Lowy AC**.

Tell us about it

What are Order of Australia recipients doing in your area? Writing books, caring for others, inventing products — you name it, they are probably doing something worth sharing with others. Just send a line to the National Secretary [address in box on Page 4]

Tasks ahead for new committee in NSW

NSW Branch office-bearers and committee members for 2005–06: (Seated L–R) Mary Doughty AM, Elaine O'Brien OAM, Sister St Jude Doyle OAM, Joan MacKenzie OAM, Silvana Vidoni OAM and Helen Christian; (standing L–R): Immediate Past Chairman Rev Dr Douglas Parker OAM, Dr Keith Reeve AM, Dr John Lincoln AM, Chairman Wolfgang Grimm AM, Bernard Banton AM, Giulio Vidoni OAM and John Laforest OAM. Committee members not in the photograph are Paul Couvret OAM, Bill Galvin OAM and Colleen Wardell OAM.



Pausing for a picture on the occasion of National Chairman Neil Conn AO's visit to the Northern Territory Branch — from left, standing: Dr Val Asche AM, Alasdair McGregor OAM, Kathleen Short OAM, Dr Conn, Rosemary Burkitt OAM, Wendy James OAM. Seated: His Honour the Administrator of the Northern Territory, Ted Egan AO.

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Association's founding ideas-man at 100 ...



... and still going strong

Mr Ken Cavanough AM (above) was honoured at a recent function at the Kogarah Town Hall for his 100th birthday.

He is a former mayor of the South Sydney area covered by Kogarah Council. In 1976 he was made a Member of the then recently established Order of Australia — on Australia Day — for services to local government and volunteerism.

He was instrumental in forming the Order of Australia Association, submitting the first draft Constitution. When the Association was formed on July 22, 1980, he had the position of Committee Secretary.



Mr Cavanough (centre) on his 100th birthday, flanked on the left by Dr Keith Reeve AM, NSW Branch Committee Member, and on the right by National Chairman Dr Neil Conn AO.