



Chairman's Report

The Western Australia Branch is pursuing a full programme of activities and events. In addition we have some objectives which will be an ongoing challenge to achieve but are nevertheless worthwhile.

Firstly, our programme.

In June our Dedication Evensong at St George's Cathedral was a success. The former Agent General for Western Australia, Kevin Skipworth, CVO, delivered a memorable address which traced the life and commitment to duty of the Head of the Order, HM the Queen. His address is accessible on our website.

Also in June the Queen's Birthday Honours list was announced and we were especially delighted that our Patron, HE the Governor of Western Australia, Mrs Kerry Sanderson, was elevated to the rank of Companion of the Order (AC).

In August our welcome to all the new recipients will be held at Curtin University, and we are most grateful to the University and its Vice Chancellor, Deborah Terry AO, for hosting the event with us. Invitations will be issued to our membership in due course.

In September our premier social event of the year will be held – the Annual Dinner at the Royal Perth Golf Club. It will be conducted in the presence of HE the Governor and addressed by Dr Stephen Langford, Director of Medical Services at Royal Flying Doctor Services Western Operation.

In November the Great Southern Regional Group will hold its annual get together, meeting, church service and dinner in Albany.

Our community activities continue: the Police Academy Mentoring Programme and the Careers Guidance Programme. Volunteers are needed for both!

Administratively we have succeeded in greatly increasing the number of our members accessible by email, which allows us more frequent affordable communication. The constitution allows

official notices (of meetings etc.) to be sent electronically so this is a move with lasting benefit. Our aim of course is to get all those with email on line for us, and certainly to ensure all new members are email recorded.

Secondly, to larger objectives.

We have identified through a strategic plan and promotion plan some strategies to increase nominations. Western Australia in particular lags in the field of nominations and awards.

We are emphasising the eligibility of all Australians to be nominated and to make nominations. Those simple facts about the Order are something many people do not realise, and it particularly emerged in our interactions with the public when we participated with a stand at the Government House Open Day (for facilitating which we thank our Patron).

We have prepared and made available (on our website and on request) a simple guide to making nominations which are successful. We suspect from anecdotal evidence that many worthy nominations fail because they are inadequately presented.

Another concern we are yet to address with any specific action is the lack of nominations of women for awards in the Order, although we noted with pleasure that the two Companion awards for Western Australians in the Queen's Birthday list were women (our Governor and Patron, Mrs Kerry Sanderson, AC, and Justice the Hon. Carmel McClure, AC). Some strategies to approach the issue of nominations of women are emerging and when time permits will be pursued!

Best wishes,

CHANGING VOCATIONS

ORDER OF AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION'S WA BRANCH' PLANS TO FURTHER DEVELOP ITS "ASPIRATIONAL CAREER GUIDANCE PROGRAM" FOR PRE-YEAR 10 STUDENTS

The message is slowly getting through to the community at large that job security as we knew it is in rapid decline. As stated in the recent ABC Four Corners Program some 40% of existing jobs will no longer be in existence in ten to fifteen years. Whether we like it or not the "automation and robotics" revolution is here with driverless vehicles and increasingly clever robots becoming a fact of everyday life.

All the more reason why we need to help our teachers bring these facts to the attention of young students. The scale of the challenge is immense with some authorities claiming that of the twelve million jobs currently available five million will be lost in fifteen years, with the problem being worst in the regional areas. Already some 50% of jobs previously carried out by dockworkers have been lost to robotics.

Consequently teachers are having to be much more flexible in their approach in helping students with their career pathway planning by encouraging them to be prepared for multiple careers, emphasising the importance of transferable and enterprising skills and a sound knowledge of ICT and STEM subjects.

It is against this backdrop that the Order of Australia's WA Branch became convinced of the need to contribute in some small way to help Senior High School teachers meet these challenges. Now that we're in the process of bringing our "Three School Career Guidance Program" to a successful conclusion our efforts are being directed towards the development of a "Web-based Aspirational Career Guidance Best Practice Manual" for use by teachers state-wide.

Professor Odwyn Jones. AO

**HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER OF OUR ASSOCIATION
CHECK OUR WEBSITE www.theorderofaustralia.asn.au**



WA POLICE ACADEMY POLICE PATRON SCHEME – PROFESSOR ROSS DOWLING OAM

From November 2015 till June 2016 I had the honour and privilege of being a Patron to one of the new Police Recruit Squads at the WA Police Academy. My squad was Gold 09/2015 comprising 30 recruits both male and female, ranged in age from 19 – 48 years, and included members who were Aboriginal, Maori, Indian, Fijian, English, Scottish, African, and Korean. Some had previously been in the military, the rest were from all walks of life. Surprisingly, for me, between them they had 16 Bachelor's degrees and one Masters degree.

During their 28 week training I visited the squad on average about once every two weeks. I sat in on some of their classes – things like business writing, pursuit driver training and drill instruction, and I watched as they undertook scenario training where they were sent into realistic crime scenes and had to arrest 'offenders'.



Members of the WA Police Recruit Gold Squad 9/2015 graduating at the WA Police Academy on 3 June 2016. I am sitting beside Dr Karl O'Callaghan APM, Commissioner of Police and the Honourable Liza Harvey MLA, Deputy Premier and Minister for Police.

I also watched some of their heavy duty physical training which tested their determination and how they performed under duress.

Over the duration of their training I got to know them all and thoroughly enjoyed the experience of being 'on the inside'

with them throughout. It was a wonderful experience and I recommend it to other members of the Order of Australia Association as one opportunity to further serve the community. The benefits are manifold and it is a real thrill to be part of their final Graduation Ceremony before they commence their police duties.

ANNUAL DINNER GUEST SPEAKER- DR STEPHEN LANGFORD

Dr Stephen Langford joined the Royal Flying Doctor Service for one year in 1983. As a private pilot with an interest in aviation and emergency medicine, the North West of Western Australia seemed a better fit than the sojourn in the Antarctic he was contemplating. As one of only two doctors employed by the Western Australian Section of the service, he commenced work in the Pilbara.

There were no mobile phones, personal computers or internet. Remote communications used HF radio and flights were in piston-engine aircraft. Three decades later the RFDS has changed significantly but is still 'one of the few jobs in medicine where you can really make a difference to people's lives every day'.

In this book, Dr Langford records the modern history of the RFDS in Western Australia, highlighting how the work of a flying doctor has changed substantially in that time. He provides insight into the many innovations and technological developments, particularly in medical care, that have occurred within the service since the late 1970s.

QUEEN'S 90TH BIRTHDAY ADDRESS

On 19 June an Evensong Service was held at St. Georges Cathedral, Perth. At the Service Mr Kevin Skipworth delivered an outstanding address commemorating Her Majesty The Queen's 90th Birthday.

This address is available for all to read on the website of the Order of Australia, Western Australia Branch. Reading this address is recommended to all who respect and admire Her Majesty The Queen.

NOTICES-EVENTS QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY AWARD RECIPIENTS

A reception will be held at Curtin University Thursday August 25th to introduce and welcome all new Award Recipients. Invitations to members to follow shortly.

POLICE ACADEMY

Michael Bleus requests one more Patron for the Police Squad commencing 5th September. Plus a further two Patrons for the Squad commencing 14th November. Interested persons are invited to contact Michael so that he can arrange a visit to the Academy. Michael's contact details are: Mobile 0450603643 email michael.bleus@bigpond.com

ANNUAL DINNERS

Great Southern Branch has scheduled the Christmas Church Service at Wesley Uniting Church, Duke St, Albany followed by a Festive Lunch, Sunday 20th November 2016, to be held at the Motel le Grande. Jan Savage will be sending invitations out shortly.

Western Australian Branch has scheduled the Annual Dinner for Wednesday 14th September 2016. This event will be held at the Royal Perth Golf Club premises in South Perth. Our Guest Speaker will be Dr Stephen Langford, Director of Medical Services, Royal Flying Doctor Service

South West Branch has scheduled the Christmas Dinner for Thursday 8th December 2016. This event will be held at the historic Rose Hotel, Bunbury.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE OPEN DAY – AN OPPORTUNITY

On the 15th May members of the public were invited to an Open Day at Government House in Perth. The focus of the day was the heritage of this wonderful House, which was built in 1863, and the camellias and azaleas in the beautiful gardens which surround it made a glorious show of colour.

In keeping with the heritage theme, the 1975 Vice Regal Rolls Royce was displayed, courtesy of the WA Motor Museum, as were Veteran Cars and Vintage Fire Engines, which created a great deal of interest amongst the many visitors.

The WA branch of the Order of Australia was invited to have a stand on the day and was placed in a most advantageous spot in the reception area of the House to capture passing traffic. Many people were intrigued with the medal display and it was an opportunity to talk to them and explain the nomination process and encourage more nominations. It has been encouraging that there have been several follow up enquiries for further information.



A LIFE OF SERVICE - THOMAS PATRICK FISHER OAM JP

It is with great sadness that we learnt of the passing of Tom Fisher OAM JP. From the time of his war service until his later years, Tom served Australia and his fellow Australians.

Tom was the last West Australian to have seen action in HMAS Sydney II. Serving in her during operations in the Mediterranean, including the Battle of Calabria and the sinking of the Italian cruiser Bartolomeo Colleoni.

Tom remained with the Sydney on her return from the Mediterranean to Australian waters. He was posted off Sydney on 26th October 1941, twenty-four days before she was lost with all hands.

Tom was then posted to HMAS Hobart and saw action again in the Battle of the Coral Sea and at Guadalcanal. Hobart endured many bombing attacks, but came through them relatively unscathed.

Patrolling the waters off the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) Hobart was torpedoed. Thirteen of the crew were killed. The ship suffered major damage aft, losing two propellers and shafts. After temporary repairs, Hobart was escorted back to Sydney.

Tom served in several other ships including, HMAS Yarra, Stuart, Ararat and Quiberon.

After the War, Tom returned to finish his apprenticeship as a mechanic. Upon qualifying, he joined the RAC as a Road Patrolman. Later in his career with the RAC, Tom moved up to be a claims assessor and eventually rose to become the WA state manager for RAC Insurance.

Tom met his life-long partner Shirley Kelly after the war. They were married on 28 April 1951 at St Kieran's church in Tuart Hill. Tom and Shirley had 5 children. Sadly they lost their last baby at 6 weeks of age.

The Society of St Vincent de Paul was Tom's major interest outside of family and work. He devoted most of his time helping those in need, and participating in the running of the Society. Tom was State President for many years and the longest serving member of the St Vincent de Paul Society. His charitable work has been recognised with many awards, including the naming of 'Tom Fisher House', a refuge for homeless men, in Highgate.

REST IN PEACE

WA BRANCH

Office-Holders & Committee Members

Patron

Her Excellency Hon Kerry Sanderson AO

Chairman

Bill Hassell AM JP

Secretary

Professor Robin Watts AM

Treasurer

Mr Ian Williams AO

Committee

MAJGEN Barry Nunn AO RFD ED

Michael Bleus OAM

Mark Bonsor AO CSC

Bettine Heathcote AM

Professor Odwyn Jones AO

Helen Smith OAM

Terence Barritt OAM

Regional Coordinators

South West Region

Mrs Glenys McDonald AM

Great Southern Region

Mr Ken Pech AM JP

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Thomas Fisher as a young naval serviceman



Thomas Fisher in his advanced years