



Pictured from L to R is Deputy Commissioner Scott Lee, Clare McGrath OAM, A/g Superintendent Anna Daw, Jude Bowman, Angela Di Pauli and Albert Orszaczky.

Message from the Board

2026 is galloping along and we have kicked off our year of planning and activities, none of which would be possible without you, our members and volunteers.

We have set some strong goals for the next 12 months as outlined in our Strategic Plan. In addition to continuing our community engagement activities, we aspire to grow our membership and seek volunteers who wish to actively contribute to NHWACT and to strengthen our partnerships and networks. We thank you for your on-going commitment and support and look forward to working together to make our community a safe and secure environment.

- Your comments and suggestions are welcome and can be provided to admin@nhwact.org.au.

NHW Member profiles

NHWACT has launched a new initiative where our intrepid reporter, Emily, chats with a member of Neighbourhood Watch ACT, asking a series of questions and sharing their story with the wider community. By profiling our members, we hope to help the community get to know the people behind Neighbourhood Watch and our NHWACT message.

A new profile is published on the website mid-month and also on our NHWACT Facebook Page. The aim is to introduce a wide cross-section of our members who contribute at all levels of the organisation. We cover members from north and south, male and female, local NHW identities as well as members of the Board. It demonstrates the diversity of roles and opportunities available and the talented and dedicated members who help to make our communities safe and secure.

You can find the profiles at <https://nhwact.org.au/index.php/profile-articles/>

**GETTING TO KNOW
CLARE MCGRATH**
A monthly feature on the members of Neighbourhood Watch ACT
by Emily Harding
January

I've been involved since 14 in Ainslie—it's in my DNA

Clare McGrath OAM - Vice President, Area contact for Ainslie since 1984 to Current

How long have you been involved in Neighbourhood Watch, and what first motivated you to join?

I've been involved in ACT NHW since it started in 1984. When the program started in Ainslie, information was sent to the ACT Police to help inform and involve the community about NHW. Police attended suburb meetings initially until Neighbourhood Committees could be formed. I was motivated to join because I grew up in a rural country town where there was a strong sense of community. After moving to Ainslie, I wanted to recreate that feeling of belonging to know people, helping them feel comfortable and safe in their neighbourhood, and building friendships. As part of NHW ACT allowed me to contribute to a community while raising a family.

When did you first hear about Neighbourhood Watch ACT?

I first heard about NHW ACT through box leaflets distributed by ACT Policing in 1984.

What roles have you held, and what does your current role involve?

I started as President of the Ainslie Neighbourhood Watch, coordinating 52 people to distribute letter and leaflet drops. I later became Vice President for the North Side, where I manage enquiries, support new members, make and organise personal

welcome packs and visits to new Members and coordinate volunteers for leaflet distribution. My current role focuses on sharing valuable information and helping people feel welcomed, connected, and supported in their community.

What aspect of Neighbourhood Watch do you most passionately care about, and why?

I am most passionate about neighbourhoods looking out for one another, which helps create a safer community. NHW encourages people to report concerns matter how small, because a community's "eyes and ears" play an important role in preventing crime and keeping neighbourhoods safe.

What skills or experiences have you gained through your involvement?

Through my involvement, including 13 years on the NHW Australia Board, I have gained valuable insight into how different states work with police and communities. I have also developed a strong collaborative relationship with Police, which has helped strengthen community safety initiatives.

<https://nhwact.org.au/> enquiry@nhwact.org.au @NHW



Royal Canberra Show

This year the Royal Canberra Show celebrated 99 years! Quite an achievement!

The weather varied from extreme heat to humidity and rain but a dedicated band of 20 NHWACT members were not deterred and staffed our stall from 9.30am to 4pm across the 3 day event. We were co-located with ACT Policing and were also joined by ACT and Region Crime Stoppers. A range of merchandise was available to patrons which included some new brochures from NHTA about personal, vehicle and home security and how to be a good neighbour. Opportunities to volunteer with NHWACT were also promoted. It was great to have some new volunteers to help out.

Constable Kenny is always a popular draw card. He celebrated his 50th birthday last year and didn't disappoint his many fans who attended the show (young, older and in between).



Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are an integral part of NHW at all levels.

NHWACT currently has a number of volunteering opportunities available including a Membership Officer, Social Media Manager, NHWACT Page Facebook Admins & Admins for several suburban NHW Facebook Groups. These have been advertised on both our Facebook page (@NHWACT) and our website at nhwact.org.au/index.php/volunteering-opportunities

Other opportunities will be advertised shortly including a media assistant and a website coordinator. Your interest in any of these positions would be welcome.



Members' Forum 23 March 2026

The first NHWACT Members' Forum for 2026 will be held on **Monday 23 March 2026** at the **Shout Room, Building 1, Pearce Community Centre, 1 Collett Place, Pearce** commencing at **6.30pm**

The agenda includes:

- A visit from ACT Policing and
- Discussions about:
 - Volunteering Opportunities
 - Website enhancements
 - How to engage more effectively with members and volunteers

Light refreshments will be served from 6.30pm with the meeting to get underway from 7pm.

Please register your interest in attending to admin@nhwact.org.au by **cob Thursday 19 March 2026** together with any specific dietary requirements.

Pictured at left are members at the October 2025 forum.

AFP Museum visit

Did you know that the AFP has a Museum?

A number of Board members and invited guests recently enjoyed a fantastic experience with two knowledgeable tour guides who showed us original vehicles and historic tools used throughout the history of the police force. It was a fascinating insight into the evolution of policing and the important role the AFP has played in keeping our community safe.

The AFP Museum is open to the public for small group tours (up to 12 at a time) and is open by appointment only. Located in Canberra, private visits are available Monday to Friday, between 10 am and 3 pm. For booking enquiries, please contact the museum via email. More information and tour bookings can be made here <https://www.afp.gov.au/about-us/history/afp-museum/visits>



Sep Westerhuis, Ian McLean, Angela Di Pauli, Jude Bowman, Emily Harding and Albert Orszaczky



Attendees were provided with an informative talk and discussion about the museum

Strategic Planning Day

The Board of NHWACT met in late January for our annual Strategic Planning Day.

This year, attendance at the Planning day was expanded to include all NHWACT Board members rather than just the Executive. This reflects the Board of Management under the new Constitution adopted at our last Annual General Meeting.

The session provided an opportunity to:

- Review progress against objectives outlined in the Strategic and Operational Plans;
- Update existing plans to reflect changing priorities;
- Review the existing budget; and
- Consider financial and budget proposals for the remainder of the calendar year and the new financial year.

In the lead up to this year's event, Area Contacts were invited to submit budget proposals for consideration. This is the first occasion the Board has requested input from areas as part of our planning activities and we were encouraged by the quality and scope of the proposals submitted. A total of 10 proposals were provided, three of which had a common theme and have been grouped together. A short list to be progressed has now been agreed by the Board and includes:

- the purchase of a portable public address system (microphone, speakers and stands) to be available for use at indoor and outdoor NHW events;
- development of a register of NHW Street signs;
- NHWACT Website Enhancements: three proposals were received on this topic which recommends a number of enhancements to the existing website to make information more accessible and useful. Similar suggestions were included in each proposal which would be treated as a single project. It is proposed that this be progressed through a small sub-committee in consultation with the Board; and
- more ready access to NHW information/signage for use by suburban NHW Groups at their local activities.

Upcoming Events

- 20 March – Volunteering Act Expo, University of Canberra Refectory from 1-7 pm;
- 23 March – NHWACT Members’ Forum Building 1, Pearce Community Centre from 6.30pm;
- 28 March – Africa in the Park, Stage 88 Commonwealth Park 10am to 4pm;
- May – Aus India Fair (date to be confirmed)



NHW Street Sign Program

The NHW Street sign renewal program continues. The signs provide a visible reminder about Neighbourhood Watch and we’ve made good progress in many suburbs. Thanks to those who have already provided input.

The general principle is that signs should be located at the main points of entry into a suburb. Other requests are considered on a case by case basis.

Members are ideally placed to identify faded and damaged signs in their suburbs and provide details, including a photo, to Admin@nhwact.org.au. We are also interested in identifying potential locations where there is no current signage.

The cost of the signs is met by NHWACT from our limited budget which means that not all requests can be satisfied.

As indicated above, the Board has approved a proposal to establish a register of street signs so we are better able to manage this work in the future.

Know how to report! Call...

000	For life threatening emergencies
131 444	Call this number if you require police assistance but there is no immediate danger
1800 333 000	Call Crime Stoppers if you see suspicious behaviour. You can report online at crimestoppersact.com.au You can report anonymously.



Social Media



Thanks to the dedicated efforts of a team comprising our Social Media Manager and ACT and suburban NHW Facebook Admins, our social media presence continues to grow. It is a way of providing information with far greater reach than just those who are formal members of NHWACT. At a local level, this information can be tailored to meet the needs of the immediate community with many groups sharing from the NHWACT Facebook page as well as other sources of information.

Thank you and keep up the great work.

In addition to the NHWACT Facebook Page and a number of "help and support" groups, we currently have 19 suburban NHW Facebook groups, some covering multiple suburbs with more than 26,200 "members".

NHWACT is continuing to invest in social media as one element of our communications strategy. A number of volunteer opportunities are available in this space, information about which is available on our website. Your investment and contribution can be tailored to meet your available time and interests, with training and support available. We'd love to hear from you about how you might help.

For more information go to nhwact.org.au/index.php/volunteering-opportunities/

Contact us:



Find us on Facebook @NHWACT



enquiry@nhwact.org.au



Be part of your Neighbourhood Watch

Join today

If you see suspicious behaviour call 1800 333 000 or report online at www.crimestoppers.com.au



Neighbourhood Watch ACT

www.nhwact.org.au

