



# NEW AUSSIES AND HARDWORKING COMMUNITY MEMBERS RECOGNISED

More than 30 Dubbo and Wellington residents have taken their pledge, to be Australia's newest citizens, at a special ceremony in Victoria Park and Cameron Park, as part of Australia Day celebrations. Mayor of the Dubbo region, Councillor Ben Shields, says the ceremony was an opportunity for all Australians, whether they are citizens by birth or by choice, to join national celebrations that reflect, respect and celebrate.

"We reflect on our history, its highs and lows – we respect the stories of all our people – and we celebrate our nation, its achievements, and most of all, its people. All Australians are encouraged to celebrate our national day and to share what Australian citizenship means to them," said Councillor Shields.

"We always welcome new citizens, and traditionally, more people become citizens on Australia Day than any other day of the year. More than 12,000 people will receive citizenship at the many ceremonies being hosted by local councils across the country on Australia Day," he said.

In addition to new citizens, six Dubbo residents and five Wellington residents have received awards for their significant contributions to their respective communities in the areas of sport, culture, and community.

Terence Clark has been named Dubbo's 2021 Citizen of the Year, for his work volunteering with the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) Support Group. Since 2001, Mr Clark has participated in a number of fundraising activities for the RFDS, but most notably is when he entered his EH Holden in the RFDS Outback Trek, driving from Coffs Harbour to Perth, via Winton. He has raised will over \$100,000 for the charity.

Wellington's Citizen of the Year award went to Gay Bennison, for her ongoing role in the Burrendong Botanic Garden and Arboretum over the last 37 years. Gay was instrumental in bringing the piece of farmland into one-of-a-kind display with more than 50,000 flowering plants, shrubs, and trees from 2,000 species of native plants.

"We received so many great nominations for this year's awards, and it's always a very hard decision when deciding who should receive this recognition. We appreciate the efforts of all our nominees, and the people who nominated them. We encourage the community to keep nominating people they believe should be recognised for their great work," said Councillor Shields.

## **CITATIONS – DUBBO AWARDS**

### **2021 Cultural Person of the Year Award - Kellie Jennar**

Dubbo Regional Council and the Citizens of Dubbo acknowledge the

contribution to the cultural community in Dubbo made by Kellie Jennar, and congratulate her on being named as Dubbo's 2021 Cultural Person of the Year.

For more than six years Kellie has worked tirelessly to the cultural and creative benefit of Dubbo through her volunteer efforts with the Dubbo Filmmakers and Dubbo Film Society. A key driver in the creation of the Dubbo Filmmakers, Kellie's efforts culminated in the organisation's incorporation as a not-for-profit in August 2019.

Kellie was instrumental in securing funding for Dubbo Filmmakers to give local people the opportunity to develop their skills and as an outlet for creative expression, enhancing the city's liveability.

Funding included 2019's 'Script to Screen' (Create NSW) and Young Filmmakers' Bootcamps (Regional Arts NSW) and 2020's Doco Deep Dive (Screen NSW).

She has also facilitated many free workshops for members to share skills and experience with up-and-coming filmmakers of all ages and backgrounds. She served as producer for Dubbo Filmmakers' web series 'To the Ends of the Earth', volunteering her time to provide an opportunity for Dubbo creatives to work and learn on a screen project, steering the team through COVID-19 to ensure completion of the project for all stakeholders involved. In 2019 Kellie co-ordinated the Women in Television and Film workshop in Dubbo, providing a chance for women to enter or re-enter the industry.

Kellie is the president of Dubbo Filmmakers and continues to advocate for and support local creators. Her influence has increased the

attendance at screenings and attracted a younger audience.

Kellie has also contributed to the ongoing success of the Dubbo Film Society and is currently serving as Treasurer.

It is this tireless dedication to the Dubbo cultural scene, and determination to help others break into the film and television industry that makes Kellie a worthy winner of the 2021 Cultural Person of the Year.

### **2021 Services to Sport Award – David Wrigley**

Dubbo Regional Council and the Citizens of Dubbo acknowledge the contribution made by David Wrigley to Harness Racing, and congratulate him on being named as Dubbo's 2021 Services to Sports Award winner.

David has been a tireless worker for the Dubbo Harness Racing Club for more than 30 years, including two terms as president, totalling nine years, a six-year stint as vice president and he continues to serve on the committee. He has served as the Dubbo Harness Racing Club delegate to the Western Districts Harness Racing Association for the past two decades and also a NSW Clubs delegate.

While he has been a highly-valued leader, it is his work behind the scenes that has ensured the Dubbo Harness Racing Club has continued to function. Along with his son Brett and wife Patsy, they run the canteen at Harness Racing meetings but David has also stepped in as a mobile driver, judge and betting supervisor as well being responsible for organising and attending Tuesday night trials each week.

David and his family are also keen participants in the sport, having owned and raced horses for at least 40 years. His dedication is reinforced by the fact it took him 19 years to get his first winner.

David is described by others at the club as a no-fuss hard worker who never seeks accolades but is always working for what is best for Dubbo Harness Racing. Often the first to the track on race days and nights, he and his family are also the last to leave. He typifies the kind of unsung hero needed to keep country sporting clubs going.

The sound position of the club and the sport in Dubbo is due in no small part to David's dedication and that is why he is such a deserving recipient of the 2021 Services to Sport Award.

### **2021 Young Sportsperson of the Year – Isabelle Russell**

Dubbo Regional Council and the Citizens of Dubbo acknowledge the contribution of Isabelle Russell to the sport of cycling and congratulate her on being named Dubbo's 2021 Young Sportsperson of the Year.

Isabelle is a quiet achiever who is fast becoming one of the rising stars of the Dubbo Cycle Club. Her performances in 2020 were outstanding particularly given the reduction in race events due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The results are the outcome of hard work and dedication Isabelle has put in through long hours of training and a positive attitude.

Isabelle started 2020 with a silver and bronze at the State Championships in January 2020, but despite her success she had a desire to improve and knuckled down with an intense training regime that included morning and afternoon training sessions. She used the

enforced COVID stoppage as a chance to train even harder and in July she emerged a vastly improved rider, getting on the podium in all three stages at the Hunter Junior Road Tour and securing second overall. She backed up the following month at the Sydney Road Championships, leading her team to gold in the Team Time Trial and earning silver in both the Road Race and Individual Time Trial.

Due to COVID the National Track Titles were held as a virtual challenge. Against a very strong field Isabelle won gold in three of five events and silver in another. This cemented her place as one of the fastest under 15s women's riders in Australia. Isabelle progressed to the NSW Country Track Championships in December as an Under 17 rider and was Crowned Country Champion after winning all three races.

Isabelle has established herself as an extremely hard-working and motivated cyclist and that effort earned her the 2020 Coaches Award from Dubbo Cycle Club. She isn't afraid to lead from the front or mix it up with older and more experienced riders. A credit to her family and her club, the Dubbo community can expect to see a lot more of Isabelle in the future. She is a very deserving Young Sports person of the Year for 2021.

### **2021 Young Citizen of the Year Award – Alex Boney**

Dubbo Regional Council and the Citizens of Dubbo acknowledge the contribution made by Alex Boney, and congratulate him on being named Dubbo's 2021 Young Citizen of the year.

Alex grew up in Dubbo and is well known and liked by many in the community, particularly the younger residents, for his good sense of

humour and lust for fun. Since beginning his role as a trainee Youth Worker at LeaderLife about three years ago, he has developed a passion for working with kids and can often be found driving the bus around the neighbourhood, helping kids get to school and making sure they are home safe.

Also as part of this role, he works alongside Dubbo's youth in the Soil2Soul program, teaching young Indigenous men about farming and helping run the small stall at the Dubbo Growers' Markets.

Alex is a keen sportsman, training Indigenous young people at touch football and making himself available to anyone who might be in a tough situation, in trouble with the police, or just in need of a friendly ear.

Alex's support of community development events and youth programs, such as PCYC's Friday Night Youth Program, are just some examples of his commitment to bettering the life of Dubbo's younger residents.

He devotes time to community togetherness, always helping out where he is needed. He can often be found greeting guests at the drive-in, and ensuring locals and tourists alike enjoy their experience while attending the event.

Alex is a proud Indigenous man who is always the first to roll up his sleeves when the going gets tough. He is happiest when he sees young people having fun and reaching their goals. For these reasons, and too many more to list, Alex is a very deserving 2021 Young Citizen of the Year.

**2021 Senior Citizen of the Year Award – David Pattinson**

Dubbo Regional Council and the Citizens of Dubbo acknowledge the contribution made by David Pattinson, and congratulate him on being named as Dubbo's 2020 Senior Citizen of the Year.

It is no exaggeration to say that David Pattinson is one of the most generous and giving people in the Dubbo community. He has spent his entire life helping those around him and always focused on the needs of others. His contribution to the community began more than 60 years ago through Rural Fire Service Brigades and has expanded from there.

Many of David's activities are related to his strong faith and dedication to the Uniting Church. He is responsible for the upkeep and repairs of the church and has been running Sunday School and youth programs for the church for several years. He also volunteered as a driving instructor with Uniting Burnside, allowing disadvantaged people with little access to a registered vehicle and supervising driver a chance to meet the requirements to sit their licence.

He is a member of the Palmer Street Singers, who perform at events around the city, and contributes to the development of future generations of singers as an assistant at the Dubbo Eisteddfod.

Those who know David describe him as more than just a quiet achiever and more of a silent hero. His compassion and caring for people who are struggling, and his focus on their mental health and wellbeing has changed the lives of many. David has particularly assisted with those who are isolated, and using his ability to always look for the good in others, has visited prisoners in incarceration to provide them with guidance.

David's contribution to the local community cannot be summed up in a few hundred words but the sheer list of organisations and community groups he is involved with, and people he has assisted during their time of need, is testament to him. His dedication has helped people from all backgrounds and this is why he is a very deserving 2021 Senior Citizen of the Year.

### **2021 Citizen of the Year Award – Terence Clark**

Dubbo Regional Council and the Citizens of Dubbo acknowledge the contribution made by Terence Clark, and congratulate him on being named Dubbo's 2021 Citizen of the Year.

A Dubbo local since 1985, Terence began volunteering with the Dubbo Royal Flying Doctor Support Group in 2001 when he entered his EH Holden in the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) Outback Trek, driving from Coffs Harbour to Perth via Winton. The car went on to make close to a dozen treks, raising well over \$100,000 for the RFDS before being donated by Terence to the RFDS tourist Experience.

For the past 17 years, Terence has served as president of the Dubbo RFDS Support Group, handing over the baton in late 2020. Under his leadership, the Dubbo Support Group raised several million dollars for the

RFDS, most of which remained in the Dubbo region. These funds helped to expand the Dubbo base operations and increase the support available to our residents. Later during his presidency, significant funds were contributed to the new tourist centre at the Dubbo base, the RFDS Experience, which has become a leading tourist attraction of the Dubbo

Region.

Terence has also served as the Director of the Royal Flying Doctor Service South Eastern Section for over a decade, being appointed in 2007. This position allowed Terence to push the expansion of the RFDS base in Dubbo to what it is today, with a pilot training centre, virtual consultations, a dental service, and the tourist Experience. Besides the usual responsibilities of a company director, Terence has a particular focus on fundraising and public relations on behalf of the RFDS in Central NSW.

Terence is known as a successful businessman, who never does anything without doing it well, who has the highest integrity and is a dedicated family man prepared to give freely of his time, labour and means to the Dubbo community.

As 2020 saw him hand on not only the presidency of the Royal Flying Doctor Service Support Group, but also resigning from the South Eastern Section Board, this award is a fitting recognition Terence's significant contributions over the past two decades. For this reason, Terence is an extremely worthy Citizen of the Year for 2021.

## **CITATIONS – WELLINGTON AWARD**

### **Community Service Award - Garry Meisch**

Dubbo Regional Council and the Citizens of Wellington acknowledge the contribution made by Garry Meisch to the community through volunteer work and congratulate him on being presented with a Community Service Award.

Garry has been a committed member of the Rural Fire Service for most of his adult life, serving as a volunteer with the Mumbil brigade of the RFS before spending more than a decade as a member of Mount Arthur brigade at Wellington. During his time there he was awarded a long service medal. He is a member of the Dubbo RFS support group and is a volunteer in airbase operations at Dubbo City Regional Airport.

Chances are that if you have seen a photo of the Geurie Goats rugby union team in local media, Garry was the man behind the lens. For several years he has attended their matches and taken thousands of photos, providing them to local newspapers for publication so the team can get the publicity it deserves. He has done a similar thing for the Wellington Cowboys and has also done filming of drag racing events at Bodangora Airport.

Garry has been on the community committee for the successful Gungie Origin concept, a league tag tournament at Wellington which promoted inclusion and team spirit by bringing together community members and police in a positive way. He has proven himself to be a very dedicated community member and continues to donate his time and energy to local events.

### **Community Service Award – Corey Sutherland**

Dubbo Regional Council and the Citizens of Wellington acknowledge the contribution of Corey Miller, and congratulate him on being presented with a Community Service Award.

Corey Sutherland is a volunteer at PCYC Wellington and helps run the youth Program on Friday Nights. With his wife he has been instrumental

in getting this program up and running.

Corey has displayed and continues to display high level leadership skills and passes these on to the youth that he works with by providing knowledge and counsel to all who attend his program.

Corey has also established a basketball program two nights a week to encourage the youth of Wellington to learn new skills and participate in team sports. Corey has developed this program himself, even covering out of pocket expenses for the participants.

Corey is employed by Joblink plus Dubbo and runs their Barber shop, but his main function in this role is to enable the youth of the area into employment and out of unemployment by mentoring and providing access to skills training.

Corey works for the community as a whole accepting no accolades for his unselfish work. His commitment to his community is remarkable, as his continued dedication to creating opportunities for the residents of Wellington.

### **2021 Young Sportsperson of the Year Award - Daniel Mezes**

Dubbo Regional Council and the Citizens of Wellington acknowledge Daniel's contribution to equestrian sports, and congratulate him on being named Wellington's 2021 Young Sportsperson of the Year.

Daniel has achieved a lot for a 10-year-old in a sport that is normally the domain of older riders. While 2020 was a difficult year due to the ongoing impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic, Daniel was able to retain his

passion for the sport and was a fine advocate during this time.

In 2021 he will be looking to build on his numerous achievements and regain several of the titles that he earned in 2019.

Some of those achievements include:

For four years Daniel was the recipient of the Miniature Horse Show Association Youth of the Year award between 2015-2018. In 2018 and 2019 he was named the St Mary's Catholic School Horse Rider of the Year.

Between 2017 and 2019 Daniel was the Wellington Pony Club Perpetual Trophy winner for sporting and in 2019 for eventing. He has represented the club for several years at pony club gymkhanas, winning age champion on countless occasions.

In 2019 he was the Central West Barrel Horse Club 10 Years and Under High Point winner.

Daniel competed in the Australian Barrel Horse National Finals in 2018 and 2019, placing in the top 15 in the first year in the Little Drummers category, and improving to fourth the next year. He was deprived of the chance to compete in these competitions in 2020 but will be ready to go again in 2021.

In addition to his accomplishments, Daniel has also proved to be a fine role model in the sport, impressing with his dedication, sportsmanship and passion for the animals. There is no doubt Daniel has a long and exciting future ahead of him and is a very worthy Young Sportsperson of

the Year for 2021.

## **2021 Citizen of the Year Award – Gay Bennison**

Dubbo Regional Council and the Citizens of Wellington acknowledge the contribution made by Gay Bennison, and congratulate her on being named as Wellington's 2021 Citizen of the Year.

Gay Bennison has played an invaluable role in the Burrendong Botanic Garden and Arboretum for more than 37 years, ensuring its success as a conservation area for native plants and a tourist attraction.

Gay was instrumental in bringing the vision of Peter and George Althofer to life, assisting the passionate brothers and working with other volunteers to turn the piece of farmland into the one-of-a-kind display with more than 50,000 flowering plants, shrubs and trees from 2,000 species of native plants, including some endangered species. In particular Gay was integral to the success of fern gully. As well as getting in and helping with the completion of the dry stone walls that lead to some of the Arboretum's best features, Gay assisted in the collection of the brush that grew over the high steel wires to provide cover and protection for Fern Gully.

Not content with this effort, more recently Gay forged relationships with local landholders to collect and grow seedlings of rare and endangered species for their preservation. Because of her horticultural skills and knowledge, she has been very successful in propagating viable plants.

Her efforts have made Gay a highly respected member of both the scientific and horticultural fields, a very welcome member of the

Wellington community and a deserving 2021 Citizen of the Year.

### **2021 Senior Citizen of the Year Award – Rod Althofer**

Dubbo Regional Council and the Citizens of Wellington acknowledge the contribution made by Rod Althofer, and congratulate him on being named as Wellington's 2020 Senior Citizen of the Year.

Rod is an extremely active and dedicated volunteer for multiple organisations throughout the district including the Rural Fire Service, Lions and Legacy. Few in Wellington could claim to have contributed more to the safety and wellbeing of the community than Rod.

For more than 55 years Rod has been a volunteer member of the Dripstone Brigade of the Rural Fire Service and over that time he has held a number of executive committee positions including being a long-term captain, and now is the chairperson of the brigade. He participated in the emergency deployments during the 2020 bushfire crisis and is passing on his knowledge to the next generation of RFS volunteers in his work as a trainer in the fields of firefighting and four-wheel-drive driver safety. Rod also provides first aid training for the organisation, continuing to utilise the skills he developed in his career as a paramedic in Wellington until his retirement in 2009.

Rod was a recipient of the Wellington Shire Council Australia Citizen of the Year award in 2008 and has showed no signs of slowing down in the last 13 years, building on his already impressive service to the community.

In the middle of one of the worst droughts on record, Rod participated in the Hay Drive throughout 2019 and 2020 to provide relief for local farmers.

Rod is an active member of the Geurie Lions Club and has previously held a number of committee positions. He has also been a long-term member of Wellington Legacy, providing care and support to local widows and families of Australian servicemen.

There can be little doubt of the compassion, care and commitment that Rod has for the Wellington community and he continues to contribute as much as ever, providing support for those who need it.

For these reasons, and many more, Rod is a very deserving Senior Citizen of the Year for 2021

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