



WELLINGTON RESIDENTS RECOGNISED AT AUSTRALIA DAY EVENT

A twilight event was held in Wellington on Thursday 25 January 2024 to recognise Australia Day and encourage inclusivity among the community.

During the event, a ceremony was held with an address by Deputy Mayor Richard Ivey, a presentation by local Indigenous Elder Herb Smith and a speech by Wellington's Australia Day Ambassador, Rhys Muldoon.

Members of the Wellington community were also honoured with Australia Day awards.

Dr Mike Augee was named as Wellington's 2024 Citizen of the Year for his commitment to the environment, his love of education and sharing knowledge of Australia's flora and fauna. Mike is involved with the Burrendong Arboretum, Wellington Heritage Committee, Mount Arthur Trust, The Caves Advisory Committee, Wellington Markets, Ponto Falls Committee, Wellington Museum and The Mammal Society.

Mike also served as a Councillor on the Wellington Council, holding the role of Deputy Mayor for seven years. Many of his hours were committed to undertaking matters entirely for the betterment of Council and the wider community.

Carolyn White, fondly known as Carol to the Wellington community, was named Wellington's 2024 Senior Citizen of the Year for her 55 years of service to the Wellington community, having worked tirelessly in several groups, associations, and events.

The 2024 Young Sportsperson of the Year was Samantha Thompson for her achievements in swimming while the Macquarie Correctional Centre's *Inside Art* was named as the 2024 Community Event of the Year.

Dubbo Regional Council Deputy Mayor Richard Ivey said it was great to see these wonderful community champions celebrated.

"As is always the case, the Australia Day committee this year had a hard job in deciding who should receive the recognition.

"We appreciate the work that both the nominees and those who nominated them put in. Congratulations to all and thank you for your service to our community," Cllr Ivey said.

CITATIONS – WELLINGTON AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – DR MIKE AUGEE

Dubbo Regional Council and the Citizens of Wellington acknowledge the contribution made by Dr Mike Augée and congratulate him on being

named as Wellington's 2024 Citizen of the Year.

Dr Mike Augee provides a wealth of knowledge and passion for Wellington and the community. He actively participates in a wide variety of community-based organisations. His knowledge and expertise surrounding the Wellington Caves and their history is astounding, as is his passion for community.

Mike established a laboratory to study the unique fossil site located at the Wellington Caves. This lab was set up to provide education to students of all ages. In 2001 Mike was awarded 'The Royal Zoology Award' for his contributions to the better understanding of mammals by the Royal Zoological Society. Mike has also published an educational book titled 'The Wellington Caves Book'.

Wanting to give back to the community, Mike served as a Councillor on the Wellington Shire Council holding the role of Deputy Mayor for seven of his eight years with Council. Many of his hours were committed to undertaking matters entirely for the betterment of Council and Community.

Mike's commitment to the environment, his love of education and sharing knowledge of this great

continent with its great flora and fauna, is seen with the organisations he is involved with. These organisations include: Burrendong Botanic Garden and Arboretum, Wellington Heritage Committee, Mount Arthur Trust, The Caves Advisory Committee, Wellington Rotary Markets, Ponto Falls Committee, Wellington Museum, and The Mammal Society.

Mike's interests now include research in field studies for

thermoregulation of echidnas, movement of flying foxes, radiotelemetry studies of ringtail possums and the effects of 1080 in predator control, further contributing to his community and the environment.

Mike is held in high regard by his peers and community, and his endless dedication to the local environment make him an extremely deserving and worthy recipient of the 2024 Citizen of the Year Award.

SENIOR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – CAROLYN WHITE

Dubbo Regional Council and the citizens of Wellington acknowledge the contribution to the community of Wellington made by Carolyn White and congratulate her on being named as Wellington's 2024 Senior Citizen of the Year.

Carolyn has demonstrated a strong community focus and drive to support the community of Wellington in her 55 years in the community. She is a testament to what can be achieved with a service mindset and community first approach. Carolyn has over 50 years of continuous volunteering for the Wellington community. All her volunteering was on an honorary basis.

Carolyn has had a strong community focus across many sectors - education, health care, aged care, religious services, and community service organisations. Carolyn's wonderful contributions to the Wellington community include:

- St Mary's School - Parents and Friends Association and volunteer
- Friends of Maranatha – fundraising and beauty services for residents

- Maggie's Fundraising – The group raised over \$100,000 for aged residents
- St Vincent de Paul Wellington - volunteer and pastoral outreach more than 15 years
- St Patrick's Parish Council – advisory committee member giving pastoral care
- Registered Nurses Association delivering community cancer clinics and other health initiatives
- Red Cross – fundraising and catering
- Wellington Eisteddfod – Over 40 years assisting with front door reception, entries, and catering
- Wellington Meals on Wheels – volunteer driver for over 30 years
- Probus – Committee member and tour director to support elderly citizens

Carolyn managed all these incredible volunteering efforts, and more, whilst raising a large family of 6 daughters, supporting her husband Michael in his business for 55 years and nursing her own elderly parents.

These selfless volunteering hours within the Wellington community make Carolyn a very deserving recipient of the 2024 Senior Citizen of the year for 2024.

YOUNG SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR – SAMANTHA THOMPSON

Dubbo Regional Council and the Citizens of Wellington acknowledge the contribution of Samantha Thompson to the sport of Junior Swimming and congratulate her on being named Wellington's 2024 Young

Sportsperson of the Year.

Swimming is Samantha's passion. She has been training and competing since she was 10 years old, travelling to Dubbo twice a day to train with Coach Anthony Chapman and the Orana Aquatic Swimming Club. Being a competitive swimmer has taken Samantha to numerous South Australian and NSW Country Championships, NSW State championships, as well as competing at a regional level almost every weekend.

Samantha is a wonderful role model for other swimmers, as her commitment is second to none. She wakes at 4:15 am making the return trip Dubbo to train, and repeats this trip again in the afternoon, 5 days per week. Although she has extended her schooling by 12 months to allow more commitment to her training, her education has not slipped and has received good results in her 2023 HSC.

Samantha will be competing at the Australian Open Water Championships on 24 - 27 January in Busselton, Western Australia in both the 10km and 5km events, as well as competing as a member of the Orana Aquatic 4 x 1500m open water team.

Samantha has a current national ranking of:

- 23 for 800m Free
- 22 for 7500m Open Water
- 30 for 5000m Open Water

Samantha's list of achievements in 2023 are:

- 2023 - Silver Medal 17 years 5km NSW State Open Water
- 2023 - 9th Place 17 years 10km NSW State Open Water
- 2023 - Silver Medal 17 years 800m Freestyle NSW Senior State Age Championships
- 2023 - Bronze Medal SA State Open Water Championships 7.5km
- 2023 - Bronze Medal SA State Open Water Championships 5km
- 2023 - 15th - 16-17 years National Open Water 5km
- 2023 - 12th - 16-17 years National Open Water 7.5km

For the above-mentioned achievements and Samantha's commitment to her sport of Swimming makes her a very deserving recipient of the Junior Sportsperson of the Year Award for 2024.

COMMUNITY EVENT OF THE YEAR – MACQUARIE CORRECTIONAL CENTRE “INSIDE ART”

Dubbo Regional Council and the citizens of Wellington acknowledge the contribution of 'Inside Art' by the residents of Macquarie Correctional Centre (MQCC) to the Wellington community and congratulate them on being named Wellington's 2024 Community Event of the Year.

MQCC has created the opportunity for residents to undertake meaningful change in their lives during their time in the facility through a range of programs introduced to enhance social skills, education, opportunities to undertake artistic classes, development of further life skills and the opportunity to mentor others are a few of the interactions available to residents. Using these skills and initiatives the residents of MQCC negotiated with management and instigated the opportunity to have an exhibition within the facility.

'Inside Art' was the initiative of the residents of MQCC. Wellington Arts is extremely proud to have partnered with MQCC to deliver two outstanding art exhibitions held in 2023 for our Central West region of NSW, along with recognition and increased understanding of the benefits of this unique correctional facility. These collective events were attended by thousands of art appreciators, media outlets, family and friends and continue to be seen as creating positive and progressive change in our society.

By promoting these programs inside the centre, we are seeing enormous change in acceptance within the community. The Western Gallery accommodates MQCC residents on the gallery floor promoting their work, reform and engaging with community. The excellent feedback we continue to receive from these major events is rewarding and has received recognition of such change by top media people, including prominent ex policeman Gary Jubelin, who hosts the podcast 'Breaking Badness', a six-episode story about how MQCC is breaking ground in creating change for inmates.

The primary focus of 'Inside Art' was to establish a way to give back to community for past errors. The exhibition saw 244 artworks presented and displayed, and inmates nominated 25% of their art sales, which totalled \$5,700, to be donated to the charity Orana Support Services. This service supports victims of crime and also provides resources and support to those released from jail seeking accommodation, work placement and issues with adjustment to daily life.

Creating significant change is a difficult task at any time. Macquarie Correctional Centre and the artistically creative residents have set an example of what can be achieved by respecting individuals and allowing them to accomplish positive goals in life with supportive resources and

mentors.

For the above-mentioned reasons 'Inside Art' and Macquarie Correctional Centre has been awarded the Community Event of the Year for 2024.

Last Edited: 29 Jan 2024