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MEDIA RELEASE

Australia Day Award Recipients

Australia Day started early in Hindmarsh Shire, commencing with a BBQ breakfast in Rainbow at 7:30am, followed by ceremonies in Jeparit, Dimboola, and finally Nhill.

Hindmarsh Shire Council's Australia Day Ambassador, Neil Soullier OAM, provided an informative and interactive address to the audience at each of the ceremonies where he was warmly welcomed by local residents.

Following presentations of local community Australia Day Awards at Rainbow, Jeparit and Dimboola, the recipients of Hindmarsh Shire Council's Australia Day Awards for Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, and Community Event of the Year were announced at the Nhill Ceremony by Mayor, Cr Rob Gersch.

YOUNG CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – SHANNON SMITH, NHILL

"It is an absolute pleasure to announce Shannon Smith of Nhill as the recipient of Hindmarsh Shire Council's Young Citizen of the Year" said Cr Rob Gersch.

Cr Gersch said, "Shannon is a very deserving recipient of this award. It is fantastic to see someone who was raised and completed their schooling locally and then go on to undertake further studies and then return to Nhill and enrich the community with the skills and experience gained during her time away".

"Shannon's dedication to her studies extended to the fact that she lived and attended school in Yogyakarta to enhance her Indonesian language skills that she now teaches to classes from Prep to year Seven at Nhill College".

"Shannon is recognised for her involvement in the community, Nhill College Staff Association President, Winner 2019 Nhill Rural Ambassador Award, volunteering at the Nhill Carols (kids' activities 2019), Friday Fiestas (kids' activities 2020), Nhill Learning Centre Performing Arts

Programme mid-year concert (sound 2019) and among other achievements was nominated for the 2020 Commonwealth Bank Teacher Award”.

“On receiving this award Shannon will fill the final place in the Hindmarsh Shire Youth Council for 2020. We look forward to seeing her contribution and guidance on the Youth Council”. concluded Cr Gersch.

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – CATHERINE BATES, NHILL

Cr Rob Gersch said “It is an honour to announce Catherine Bates as the Hindmarsh Shire Citizen of the Year”.

Catherine Bates moved from Melbourne to Nhill in 2017 to follow her passion for teaching and commencing in the role as the music teacher at Nhill College.

Since starting at the College Catherine has taught numerous students to play music instruments and has helped develop the Nhill College music department by coordinating a number of public performances. She has also assisted to coordinate dance and drama after school program at the Nhill Early Years Centre.

Catherine has been an active member of the community, organising a fabulous Carols in the park in 2019, she is a member of the Nhill and District Sporting Club who she plays netball for, a member of the Nhill Dimboola Band of which she’s travelled back from Dimboola since performing earlier today, member of the Piggery Lane Players, 2018 Rural Ambassador, Coordinated the A & P Society Rural Ambassador 2019, Conductor of Sing Australia Nhill and has recently taken on the role of Secretary as the Nhill Town Committee.

Since relocating to Nhill in 2017, Catherine has become a passionate resident and has had an immeasurable impact on the broader community of Nhill and District.

“On behalf of Council I congratulate Catherine as a very deserving recipient of the Hindmarsh Shire Council 2020 Australia Day Citizen of the Year Award”, concluded Cr Gersch.

COMMUNITY EVENT OF THE YEAR – NHILL AVIATION HERITAGE CENTRE NHILL AIRSHOW 2019

“This year’s award goes to the Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre for the Nhill Airshow 2019, which can only be described as a fantastic effort!”

The 100 Years of Aviation – 2019 Nhill Airshow was one of the most anticipated events of 2019 within the shire and surrounding regions. Any event that attracts nearly 3,000 people from across Australia to Nhill for an event of this magnitude can only be considered as an outstanding success.

Of particular relevance was the outstanding way the event was handled as a result of the adverse weather experienced on the day that required the rearrangement of entertainment, food stalls etc. and of course the flying events.

‘On behalf of Council, I congratulate the Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre as a very worthy recipient of the Community Event of the Year’,

“Hindmarsh Shire Council sincerely thanks everyone who took the time to submit nominations for the 2020 Australia Day Awards and congratulates everyone on their nominations across all categories” added Cr Gersch.

“Council would like to sincerely thank Neil Soullier OAM for being the Hindmarsh Shire Council’s Australia Day Ambassador, for attending the events in Rainbow, Jeparit, Dimboola and Nhill and for sharing his story and experiences with our communities”.

“I would like to extend our gratitude to the volunteers who run the Australia Day events - Rainbow Lions Club, Jeparit Town Committee, Dimboola CWA, Dimboola Town Committee and Nhill Lions Club”. Cr Gersch concluded.

Greg Wood
Chief Executive Officer