



Australia Day Award winners

25 January, 2019

This year Break O'Day's Australia Day celebrations were a bit different and saw the coastal community hosting a twilight market at the Portland Hall, St Helens on Australia Day eve, Friday 25 January.

The celebration included local artisan stalls, live music from east coast band, The Pretty Things, food and beverages as well as the annual Australia Day Award ceremony.

Break O'Day Mayor Mick Tucker said one of his favourite duties as Mayor was giving out the Australia Day awards.

"As a small, regional community we rely heavily on our community members to volunteer and generally step up to support the rest of the community.

"This can be as simple as volunteering to run meals on wheels, dedicating personal time to engage with youth services or fundraising.

"We have so many hardworking community members that we are faced with a really hard decision every year as to who to award the Australia Day Citizen and Young Citizen as well as our own Community service awards," Mayor Tucker said.

This year Break O'Day's Australia Day ambassador was Mr Bob Clifford of Incat fame, a fitting choice for the coastal community.

"Bob is a real Tasmanian icon who continues to showcase the innovation of Tasmanian ship building to the rest of the world.

"We would like to thank Mr Clifford for attending our celebrations and appreciate his involvement," Mayor Tucker said.

Below is a list of the Break O'Day Award winners and a brief description as to why they were selected as winners.

Australia Day Citizen of the Year – Melanie Norton

Through her work as the leader of JAM and the Salvation Army in the Break O'Day area, Melanie Norton has touched the lives of many in our community.

With an enthusiasm to help others and inspire people to achieve, Melanie's dedication to our community goes above and beyond her work role; she has a deep seeded and genuine compassion to see others succeed.

Melanie started and still runs JAM (Jesus and Me) which has helped and supported many children and youth.

Not only does Melanie see the good in everyone, she makes herself available to others whenever is needed.

In the words of the person who nominated Melanie:

"Melanie represents everything an Australia Day winner should, compassion, sincerity, gentleness, comprehension, common sense and a fair go for all."

"If only there were more Melanies in Break O'Day, we would indeed be living in a paradise."

On behalf of the Break O'Day Community, thank you Melanie, your compassion for others is something we could all learn from.

Young Australian Citizen of the Year – April Bromley

As a volunteer of the Break O'Day SES, April consistently puts the needs of others above her own.

During her two and a half years volunteering, she has helped people through natural disasters like fire and flood as well as car accidents and even volunteered to help at the One Night Stand.

During her time with the SES, April has been an advocate of the organisation, not only living the values of the organisation which include; Challenge and innovate, and Be accountable for your actions, she has also recruited others to the organisation. Recruitment is crucial to this organisation which relies on volunteers.

Not just content with her role with the SES, April also entered the UGLY (Understanding, Generous, Likeable You) Bartender competition in 2018 so she could raise funds for people living with blood cancers.

We commend April on all her selfless efforts and hope that others in the community will consider her a great role model. We can't wait to see what you do next.

Break O'Day Municipality Excellence Award – Sally Felmingham

As a small community, we often call on the same dedicated community members to help us with various volunteer driven services and events, a true example of a community member who has always made herself available is Sally Felmingham.

Always eager to lend a hand Sally has been involved with the local Cub Scouts for 18 years and has been a leader for 12 years.

Sally also spends some of her evenings delivering meals on wheels which she started in 2001 and is still doing today.

She has strong ties to the tennis and football clubs and has been helping with the running of the Tip Shop since its establishment.

There is just simply nothing that Sally wouldn't do for her community and it is an honour to be able to present her with this special award, the first of its kind. As a community we would like to thank Sally for all she does.

Break O'Day Municipality Excellence Award – Stephen Jones

Stephen likes to slip beneath the radar and is always very humble about his huge contribution to our community. But Stephen, we all want you to know that what you do for us all does not go unnoticed.

Stephen is a real touch-stone of our community working with various groups and individuals from all walks of life for no other reason than the joy of seeing people succeed.

Stephen is a driving mentor for the Get in 2 Gear program and has helped many people in our community get their licences. He is also a literacy mentor for the school mentoring program, President of the Rotary Club, secretary of the Bay of Winter Arts Festival, member of the Scouts and a committee member of THRIVE, an action group that works out of the St Helens Neighbourhood House on a variety of activities.

He consistently puts the needs of others before his own and is dedicated to making a real change to the lives of others in our community.

Thanks Stephen for all you do, we want you to know just how much we all appreciate you. You are an invaluable member of our community.

Mayor's Special Award – Margaret Torrens

For 31 years Margaret Torrens has been tirelessly working at the St Helens School Op Shop.

One of the founding members, Margaret has shown dedication and enthusiasm for her community without the need to be acknowledged or rewarded in anyway.

The School Op shop has proven itself to be a great fundraiser for the school but its success lies firmly in the hands of dedicated volunteers like Margaret.

Margaret actually retired at the end of last year so it seems like the ideal time that we thank and express our gratitude to her 31 years of volunteer work.

On behalf of our community please accept our sincere thanks Margaret.

Mayors Young Citizen Special Award – Ebony Duke

An outstanding role model for youth in the community, Ebony Duke works tirelessly to see the sporting goals of others achieved.

Ebony is a volunteer for both the St Helens Football Club as well as the Netball Club. At the Football Club she is the Fundraising coordinator and was instrumental in a joint fundraising event between both the football and netball clubs, now set to be an annual event.

For the Netball Club, Ebony is the Junior Development Coordinator and held the position of Develop a Diamond Academy Manager in 2018.

Ebony is also an umpire and regularly spends much of her spare time umpiring as well as providing transport to team members to ensure that there is a full team.

Ebony is a true role model for our youth and on behalf of the community I would like to thank her for putting the needs of her peers above her own.

Break O'Day Community Service Award – Jessie Presnell (NEW)

At 90 years young, Jessie Presnell continues to do all she can to help others.

For seven years, Jessie was a volunteer at Medea Park teaching residents how to knit and crochet. During this time she donated handmade rugs to residents and also donated them to raffles which raised fun for the facility.

If you want to see Jessie's other passion, all you have to do is look at her room walls which are filled with photos of South African children wearing jumpers and beanies that she has knitted. She estimates that over the years she has donated over 2000 jumpers and beanies to South African children in need.

Jessie is a much loved resident by staff and Medea Park residents alike and someone for our whole community to look up to and aspire to.

What a big heart you have Jessie, thank you on behalf of the community.

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For more information or photos, please contact Break O'Day Council's Communications Coordinator, Jayne Richardson on 6376 7900 or 0400 454 089