

11 December 2020 – For Immediate Release

BERRI BARMERA COUNCIL AUSTRALIA DAY AWARD RECIPIENTS

Berri Barmera Council has announced their 2021 Australia Day Award recipients for the Berri Barmera Council area. “Again, we have had some excellent nominations this year and we are very fortunate to have so many active people doing great things in our community” said Mayor Hunt. The Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, Community Event of the Year and Berri Barmera Council’s “Building a Better Community” award were endorsed at the Community Grants and Award Selection Committee meeting held on 9 December 2020.

Citizen of the Year was awarded to Sue Webber for her dedication to Barmera Guides and her service to the community. Sue is a well-known and respected member of the Barmera and Glossop communities and has provided over 40 years of service to the Barmera Guides. In 1978 she was awarded the Queens Guide Award and shortly afterwards became an assistant leader. As a Guide Leader, she has been able to extend her volunteering to incorporate State and International Events.

This was going to be a big year for Sue assisting with the organising of the SA Guide State Camp being held at the Riverland Field Days site. Unfortunately, this event, like many others this year, was cancelled due to COVID-19.

Sue has also been a volunteer on the Barmera Christmas Pageant Committee for many years and joined the Barmera Centenary Committee in 2020. Where she exhaustively supports all of these groups in raising funds by assisting with events, raffles, bingo nights and the like. As part of her role as leader for the Barmera Girl Guides, she was able to raise funds to ensure the Barmera Guides were able to attend celebrations in Norfolk Island. Every year on Pageant night, you will see her on the gate collecting donations always with a smile, her enthusiasm and fun nature encourages those around her to achieve their best result.

Young Citizen of the Year was awarded to Deni Eleftheriadis. Deni has been one of the driving forces behind Glossop High School applying to be part of the “Our Town” Berri initiative. The initiative falls under the Fay Fuller Foundation who provide support and funding for programs for up to 10 years. Berri was shortlisted as one of the 5 final towns to receive \$45,000 for their “Our Town” Berri program, which focuses on long term mental health.

Deni is an active member of the community working party who are developing a long-term mental health plan. The working party meet online to discuss data and develop options and insights for forward planning.

To build on community awareness, Deni along with fellow Glossop High School student Jack Monaco, have been instrumental in communicating this initiative through workshops, setting up Facebook page and talking on local radio stations. Both Deni and Jack received an Order of Australia – Highly Commended acknowledgement this year for their work on the Our Town Berri initiative.

As part of her leadership, Deni works with primary schools where she mentors younger students to improve connection and a sense of positive wellbeing including transition into high school. Deni regularly updates her peers by addressing students at school assemblies with updates of the progress of the Our Town project and building on community awareness for mental health.

Deni an avid netballer and basketballer, representing Glossop High School and the Riverland in both sports, and volunteering her time coaching, umpiring, being a committee member and program facilitator for local clubs. The passion she brings to her involvement in community activities places her in good stead in becoming a future community leader.

The Community Event of the Year was awarded to the Riverland Primary Schools' Music Festival – Inaugural Grand Final Event.

In a year fraught with many challenges, the committee showed strength and determination to see 250 students from 18 schools collaborate to participate in an event. The committee worked around the clock to ensure that they could devise and safely manage the choir allowing them the opportunity to enjoy their passion of music.

The transition to online learning provided challenges for both students and teachers, with the choir teachers maintaining a positive attitude and adapting their teaching styles to match the unique conditions. To facilitate sessions, a YouTube Channel for choir lessons was created, thereby assisting students with learning songs, establishing a virtual choir. The event provided the opportunity for every child to come away a winner and show strength and resilience.

The Berri Barmera Council “Building a Better Community” Award was awarded to the Riverland South Australian Aboriginal Secondary Training Academy. Since the Academy opened 6 years ago, the percentage of young Aboriginal people finishing school and moving into employment or further study has increased dramatically. Attendance has also improved and many of the graduates are now employed within our local community. The success of these young First Nations people has also assisted in breaking down barriers and built respect between groups within our community.

Mayor Peter Hunt along with the Elected members and staff congratulate these very worthy recipients and look forward to presenting their Awards at the ceremony of the foreshore of Lake Bonney, Barmera on Australia Day 26 January 2021. An invitation is extended to all Berri Barmera residents and visitors to enjoy the Australia Day celebrations including a free breakfast and official ceremony with the award winners, their families and friends.

For media enquiries:

Contact Karyn Burton, CEO on 8582 1922, or email kburton@bbc.sa.gov.au or the award recipients

For further comment and photo opportunities from the recipients their contact details are as follows:

Citizen of the Year: Sue Webber 0403 854 554

Young Citizen of the Year: Deni Eleftheriadis 0448 887 754 (mum Chrissy)

Event of the Year: Riverland Primary School's Music Festival - 0415 254 559
(Joanne Whitehead)

Building a Better Community: Riverland South Australian Aboriginal Secondary Training
Academy – 0439 841 398 (David Binney)