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MEDIA RELEASE

Alexandrina announces 2020 Citizen of the Year Recipients

20 January 2019

Alexandrina Council is proud to announce recipients of the 2020 Citizen of the Year awards, to be presented at the 2020 Australia Day Ceremonies in Goolwa and Strathalbyn on 26 January. The awards celebrate the valuable ways in which individuals and groups have contributed to their communities in 2019.

The Citizen of the Year awards will be presented to Anthony Baker of Mount Compass, and Leonie Henderson of Clayton Bay.

Anthony has been an active member of the Mount Compass Community for many years; having volunteered at the CFS since moving to the town, where he is currently captain of the brigade. He has also been vice chairperson and an active committee member of the Mount Compass War Memorial Community Centre, and was involved in the community drive for a recreation park in Mount Compass. Anthony volunteers his time for the betterment of the community at the many working bees, fundraising BBQs and helping out wherever required, also being involved in coordinating ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day services in Mount Compass.

Leonie Henderson has been described as the 'thread and glue that holds the wider Clayton Bay area together.' She has volunteered at the Clayton Bay Boat Club for many years, is the former president of the Clayton Bay Community Association Committee, has volunteered with the Clayton Bay Environmental Group, and created the Clayton Bay Calendar for the past eight years; raising money for the Clayton Bay Community Association. Leonie has also been responsible for securing a number of grants for various projects around Clayton Bay, including the 'Colouring Clayton' project, in conjunction with local artist Annabelle Collette (1955-2019), to decorate power poles and shelters around the town. On top of all this, she was also one of the main organisers of the 2019 Rural Women's Gathering in Strathalbyn and has coordinated many other events and fundraisers for the community.

The Young Citizen of the Year awards will be presented to Ebony Brackstone of Goolwa, and Tabitha Lewis of Strathalbyn.

Ebony has been a passionate and enthusiastic volunteer and member with the Southern Fleurieu Youth Advisory Committee and the Strathalbyn Community Youth Group for a number of years. She has been a key planner in many regional youth events including Fusion, Youth Week, and many other community events. Recently, Ebony was part of a group who won a Local Drug Action Team Grant to provide a 'natural high' event in Strathalbyn, engaging the youth and promoting a drug and alcohol-free lifestyle. For the past three years, she has represented the region at the United Nations Youth Conference and last year also attended the State Government Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy Summit.

For over a decade, Tabitha has been a mentor and advocate for youth in the Strathalbyn community. She has fostered confidence and life skills to countless young people through her involvement in the Strathalbyn Youth Theatre Group, Strathalbyn Players and the Church of Christ. Tabitha has also taught many people to swim through her role as swimming coach at the Strathalbyn Swimming Club and planned many entertainment events for the Strathalbyn Rotary; epitomising kindness, diversity and community mindedness.

The Community Service of the Year Awards will be presented to Allan Pomery of Port Elliot, and the Strathalbyn Rotary Club for the Great Duck Race.

Allan has been a long-standing contributing member to the Alexandrina community. Having worked with Alexandrina Council for almost 40 years, he has developed many skills through various roles which have seen him develop a detailed knowledge of the area. Allan is also captain of the Port Elliot CFS Brigade and has volunteered his services both locally and interstate as required for many years, also training volunteers in all facets of the role. For over 45 years, Allan has meticulously wound the clock at St Jude's Church in Port Elliot on a weekly basis and is a wealth of knowledge in local history.

The Strathalbyn Rotary Club has successfully run the Great Duck Race for over 30 years, raising significant funds to donate to local groups and charities. The ever-popular event is well supported by local businesses and community members, and attracts many people from outside of the region, who enjoy the spectacle and fanfare associated with the event.

The Community Event of the Year Awards will be presented to The South Coast Jazz Festival and the SA Rural Women's Gathering.

The inaugural South Coast Jazz Festival was held in Goolwa in October 2019, bringing a significant and much needed boost to the retail and hospitality sectors. Featuring an eclectic program of quality jazz musicianship and entertainment, the festival was enjoyed by 500 delegates and attendees. Many came from around the country to enjoy the music of the festival and tourism offerings of the wider region. The organising committee worked from the beginning of 2019 to secure musicians and involve local community groups and businesses; fostering inter-generational participation and support.

The SA Rural Women's Gathering was held in Strathalbyn in October 2019 and provided the opportunity for over 180 women from around the state to meet for three days of workshops, recreation and fun. The organising committee worked tirelessly for 8 months to present a program which also included catering and entertainment for the participants.

Alexandrina Mayor Keith Parkes, congratulated all award recipients, and acknowledged the positive impact they have on our community.

"It is a privilege to recognise our 2020 Citizen of the Year award recipients. Through their generosity, tireless work ethic and humble nature, they exhibit the genuine identity of Alexandrina." he said.

"On behalf of Alexandrina Council, I acknowledge the exceptional involvement of these community groups and individuals, who are stalwarts of the region and selflessly offer their skills, experience and services to benefit our residents and visitors."

Recipients will be honoured at two Australia Day ceremonies in Alexandrina. The first will be held at Soldiers Memorial Gardens, Strathalbyn at 9am, with the second ceremony taking place at Centenary Hall, Goolwa at 11am.

A traditional Australia Day breakfast will precede the Goolwa and Strathalbyn ceremonies. The Rotary Club of Strathalbyn will host breakfast at the Soldiers Memorial Gardens from 7.30am, while Goolwa's breakfast will commence at 8am at the Goolwa Bowling Club on Goyder Street, with thanks to the Lions Club of Goolwa.