

MEDIA RELEASE

16,201 volunteer hours and 257 volunteers recognised by Council

22 November 2023

Alexandrina Council recognised the contribution of 257 volunteers at its Volunteer Appreciation Event last week, including five people who have clocked up 80 years of combined service for the community.

The Alexandrina Council Volunteer Appreciation Event was held at Centenary Hall in Goolwa on 17 November with lunch and entertainment.

Mayor Keith Parkes presented certificates to Errol Thorp who has been volunteering with the PS Oscar W for 25 years, Elaine Wood who has been volunteering with the Alexandrina Visitor Services at Goolwa for 15 years and Don (John) Hay who has been volunteering with the PS Oscar W for 10 years.

Certificates of Appreciation were also awarded to Cintra Amos for 20 years of service and Anthony Hargreaves for 10 years of volunteering. They were not at the event.

"Here in Alexandrina, I would like to thank each of the 257 volunteers across our programs who continue to give so generously their time and vast array of skills," said Alexandrina Council's Chief Executive Officer, Nigel Morris.

"Over the past 12 months, their contribution to the community has totalled 16,201 recorded hours.

"Our communities and organisations rely heavily on the work of our volunteers in day-to-day operations, and we are incredibly thankful for their contribution."

Council's Volunteer Programs include the Visitors Information Centres in Strathalbyn and Goolwa, the Libraries in Strathalbyn and Goolwa, the Centenary Hall and Art Galleries, Open Space and Cemeteries, Advanced Care Directive, and the PS Oscar W and River Boat Centre.

In early 2024 the new Signal Point Experience Centre will open to the public, providing opportunities for volunteers to be part of this state-of-the-art centre showcasing First Nations and colonial heritage, local produce, and arts.

Elaine Wood joined the team at Alexandrina Visitor Services at Goolwa 15 years ago because she wanted to do something in her retirement.

"I really enjoy meeting the tourists that come in," Elaine said.

“You learn so much and I love Alexandrina – it’s stunning.”

Errol Thorp, known to his friends as EJ, had been skippering river vessels such as Murray Princess and the Murray River Queen for many years before he was asked by the Friends of the PS Oscar W to take the historic paddle steamer from Murray Bridge to Goolwa in the late 1990s.

He loved the vessel and when he moved to Goolwa with his family a few years later he decided to use his specialist captain qualifications to volunteer with the Friends of the Oscar W.

After 25 years of volunteering, Errol said the paddle steamer was a historic treasure and he enjoyed the camaraderie of the Friends group.

Before joining the Friends of the Oscar W in his retirement, the closest Don Hay ever got to water was “swimming in the farm dam”.

This year he has clocked up 10 years of volunteering and he enjoys the variety of work involved with the paddle steamer.

“It’s a great team. I would encourage everyone to volunteer because you get the satisfaction of doing something for your community,” Don said

The PS Oscar W celebrated its 115th birthday in 2023.

Image: Alexandrina Council presented Certificates of Appreciation to Errol Thorp, left, who has been volunteering with the PS Oscar W for 25 years, and Don (John) Hay who has been volunteering with the PS Oscar W for 10 years





Image: Alexandrina Mayor Keith Parkes, left, and Chief Executive Officer Nigel Morris presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Elaine Wood who has been volunteering with the Alexandrina Visitor Services at Goolwa for 15 years.

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