

**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **CONCERT CAMPING, SES VETERAN AND YOUNG SPORTS STAR NAMED MID MURRAY'S AUSTRALIA DAY WINNERS**

A community club's temporary camping experience for a major concert, a Blanchetown SES veteran and a young sports achiever have been named as the Mid Murray Council's Australia Day award winners.

The award winners have been officially announced by the Mid Murray Council at a special morning tea celebration for nominees ahead of Australia Day celebrations on January 26.

The Mannum Golf Club won the **2024 Mid Murray Council Community Event of the Year for its Sounds by the River** temporary camping facilities and experience – and their last-minute efforts that saved the major event after its usual venue at Mary Ann Reserve in Mannum was flooded.

The January 2023 concert drew over 5,500 people – many of who were in urgent need of somewhere to stay after other riverfront camping areas and tourist accommodation facilities were hit by the River Murray flood. The Mannum Golf Club responded, adapting from its original plans to only host temporary camping, to take on hosting additional camping and the concert itself – all just two weeks out from the planned concert date.

The event was an important contributor to the Mid Murray's economy and flood recovery, injecting an estimated \$3.2m into the area at a time when many businesses were suffering due to the flood.

Blanchetown resident and business owner Vaughan Mustard was named the **2024 Mid Murray Council Citizen of the Year**.

A State Emergency Services veteran and life member, Mr Mustard has served 40 years with the local brigade that he was instrumental in establishing. Over those four decades, Vaughan has been a first responder at countless road and river emergencies, helping to save many lives. He has also served 40 years there as Unit Controller.

Vaughan's extensive volunteering efforts also include donating time, equipment and expertise through his business in transporting the buildings that form the Blanchetown Sporting Bodies Classrooms, and to set up and run the Blanchetown Country Campout bush concert, which raised \$15,000 for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. He's also a life member of the local football and kart clubs. He was a founding member of the Blanchetown Lions Club and was a key contributor to projects such as the development of the Blanchetown riverfront and oval.

Eleven-year-old Hunter Danton won the **2024 Mid Murray Council Young Achiever Award**. A passionate young athlete, Hunter has already represented Morgan Primary School numerous times in Cross Country, SAPSASA and Sports Day events, and was a 2023 Sports Captain. He competed in the Little Athletics Individual Championships at Mile End in Adelaide, taking home a silver medal for shotput.

Hunter competed in the Riverland SAPSASA sports event, where he came second in the 800m and broke the shotput record – a record that hadn't been beaten in 21 years for his age group. He then made the Riverland team to compete at the championships in Adelaide for 800m and shotput, where he won a silver medal again. This landed him a spot on the State team representing South Australia at the Under 12s Track and Field Australian Championships in Launceston, Tasmania in November. Importantly, Hunter is also a role model and champion for his young peers, encouraging them to try new things and persist so that they too can achieve their potential.

Mid Murray Mayor Simone Bailey said the winners embodied a level of service, dedication and generosity that was a unique strength of the Mid Murray community.

"I congratulate our all winners and nominees, whose actions and achievements have made a significant positive impact on the Mid Murray community – in some cases over many, many years," Mayor Bailey said.

"Each year when we consider the nominees for these awards, I am inspired by the passion and hard work shown by many in our area. That can-do attitude and commitment to serving others is such an important foundation for our community's continued wellbeing and prosperity.

"We are fortunate to be part of a community that is filled with people willing to volunteer their time, talents and resources towards making the Mid Murray the incredible place it is today."

Those recognised with Australia Day awards and nominations were:

#### ***Citizen of the Year***

- **NOMINEE: ALECK ZADOW** – Aleck's passion for sport and youth wellbeing led to the creation of new sporting opportunities for young people in the Blanchetown area. During his time as President for the Blanchetown Swan Reach Football Club, Aleck introduced an Auskick program, and supported the introduction of a Net Set Go program and the club's first mixed netball season.
- **NOMINEE: Jayne Barnes** – Jayne was a strong supporter for the Bowhill and wider Mid Murray community during the recent River Murray flood. She also established the Bowhill Community Group Facebook page to keep residents informed and connected during the disaster and recovery afterwards.
- **NOMINEE: Rodger Schmidt** – Rodger was a pillar of support for the Pompoota and surrounds community during the recent River Murray flood. He assisted many flood-affected farmers, opened his farm up as a receiving point for hay donations which he distributed to local farmers in need, and actively helped to protect power infrastructure and levees.
- **NOMINEE: Ros Udy** – Ros's caring nature has benefitted many in the Mid Murray community, through her work supporting elderly residents, those in need and those with mental health conditions and their carers.
- **WINNER: Vaughan Mustard** – Vaughan is a life member of the SES who was instrumental in establishing the Blanchetown SES 40 years ago. He is also a life member of many local sporting clubs, and a founding member of the Blanchetown Lions Club.

#### ***Event of the Year***

- **NOMINEE: Keyneton Soldiers' Memorial Hall 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Dinner** – Keyneton marked the sesquicentenary of its Soldiers Memorial Hall in style with a three-course dinner and evening full of entertainment. All skits related to Keyneton life and milestones across the previous 150 years, creating a truly memorable fundraiser.
- **NOMINEE: Sedan Swap Meet** – After a three-year hiatus during COVID-19, the Sedan Swap Meet returned in 2023, attracting a strong crowd of 200 sellers and 1,200 buyers. The event was a major fundraiser for the Sedan community, benefitting the Sedan Historic Enthusiasts Den, Sedan and Cambrai Lutheran Churches, Sedan CFS and Sedan Recreation Park.
- **WINNER: Mannum Golf Club – Sounds by the River Camping** – With the River Murray flood inundating Mary Ann Reserve and many riverfront accommodation areas, the Mannum Golf Club stepped up just two weeks out from the Sounds by the River Concert to expand their planned

temporary camping to include hosting the Sounds by the River Concert itself as well. The event attracted 5,500 visitors, and an estimated economic benefit of \$3.2m.



***Young Achiever Award***

- **WINNER: Hunter Danton** – Eleven-year-old Hunter is a passionate young athlete, who has represented Morgan at a regional, State and national level. Winning two silver medals in shot put in recent competitions, he also actively encourages his peers to try and persist with sport to achieve their personal potential.

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