

STRICTLY EMBARGOED (9pm 25 January 2024)

Celebrating our community champions: 2024 Australia Day Awards

Our community's greatest advocates were recognised this evening at the 2024 Australia Day Awards Ceremony held at the Wagga Wagga Civic Theatre.

Eleven nominations were received across four categories including Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, Environmental Citizen of the Year and Walk of Honour.

These submissions were assessed by the members of the 2024 Australia Day Community Committee and finalists across all categories were revealed at the ceremony held on Thursday 25 January 2024.

Annette St Clair was named Wagga Wagga 2024 Citizen of the Year. Annette has demonstrated unwavering commitment to the medical profession, along with exceptional contributions to our community.

In 2010, Annette formed the Amie St Clair Melanoma Trust in memory of her daughter who lost her battle with the disease at an early age. Annette has been an active volunteer with the Cancer Council for over 10 years, where her enthusiasm and passionate nature has made her a wonderful advocate in the local community.

Annette also dedicates her time to participating and organising many community initiatives including a Free Community Skin Check Day, Student Ambassador Day, 'Saturday Morning All Abilities Bowling' league program, Relay for Life, St Paul's Youth Group, and the highly successful 'Living Well After Cancer' workshops which has assisted local carers and survivors.

Young Citizen of the Year was awarded to Angus Smith, an extraordinary young person who has contributed so much to the local community. He is passionate about human rights, politics and the role of young people in democracy.

Angus was selected as the Y NSW's 2023 Youth Parliamentarian and was awarded the Youth Shadow Minister for Transport & Infrastructure representing the electorate of Wagga. He presents himself as a reliable, considerate, and compassionate individual who serves as an inspiration for other young people.

Environmental Citizen of the Year was awarded to local community organisation Demonstration Gardens Wagga Wagga. Cofounders Jim Rees and Canny Kinloch have been instrumental figures in the formation and growth of Wagga Wagga's Demonstration Gardens in Shaw Street.

The Wagga Wagga Demonstration Gardens is an open and inviting community garden where locals can visit, connect, and learn through the demonstration of gardening techniques, landscaping and more.

The late Peter Cox will be inducted into the 2024 Walk of Honour.

Peter's impact on our community is immeasurable. He dedicated over 30 years to supporting, encouraging, and providing opportunities for countless individuals in the arts. His creative endeavours include writing, directing, producing, and leading numerous projects.

His prolific work in film, stage and the teaching profession have nurtured countless talents and fostered a thriving arts scene in the Riverina. Feature films *Backyard Ashes* and *The Merger* have displayed the essence of Wagga to audiences worldwide.

On stage, Peter directed and produced many musical tribute acts, stage productions, and interactive performances that nourished the talents of many local performers.

Congratulations and thank you to all our award winners and nominees.

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2024 Australia Day Awards Finalists

Annette St Clair – Citizen of the Year
0448 255 223

Angus Smith – Young Citizen of the Year
0429 952 928

Demonstration Gardens Wagga Wagga – Environmental Citizen of the Year
0411 417 956

Peter Cox – Walk of Honour
(Mitch Cox – Peter's Son – 0468 584 276)

Contact 6926 9190 or media@wagga.nsw.gov.au

About Wagga Wagga City Council

Wagga Wagga City Council serves more than 68,000 residents across an area of 4825 square kilometres with an overall budget of more than \$236M.

The organisation manages more than \$2.48 billion in assets, including a 2300km road network, Wagga Wagga Airport, Livestock Marketing Centre and the Oasis Aquatic Centre.

Council also provides important community facilities such as Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, Wagga Wagga City Library, Museum of the Riverina and Civic Theatre, as well as maintaining countless parks, playgrounds and sporting facilities to ensure Wagga maintains its reputation as 'the City of Good Sports'.

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