SHIRE OF CAMPASPE
MEDIA RELEASE

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EMBARGOED UNTIL 7PM 26 JANUARY 2016
2016 AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS -
CAMPASPE’S OUTSTANDING CITIZENS RECOGNISED

A Stanhope dairy farmer who is a passionate advocate of his community, a compassionate young role model from Rochester, a quiet achiever from Elmore who loves race-walking, a champion golfer from Kyabram, an elite basketballer from Echuca, a Rochester community event ensuring our war veterans are never forgotten and a Rochester group that coloured our world with inspiring murals, were today joined in honour by receiving the overall Shire of Campaspe 2016 Australia Day Awards.

Andrew Hipwell, from Stanhope is Campaspe’s 2016 Citizen of the Year.
Annette Waters, from Rochester, is Campaspe’s 2016 Young Citizen of the Year.
Jane Chalmers of Echuca and Naomi Cartwright of Kyabram, are joint winners of Campaspe’s 2016 Sportsperson of the Year.
Zahra Hayes, of Elmore, is Campaspe’s 2016 Junior Sportsperson of the Year.
Rochester RSL Sub-Branch is Campaspe’s 2016 Community Event of the Year
Rochester Mural Festival is Campaspe’s 2016 Arts Group of the Year.

“The prestigious Campaspe Australia Day Awards give formal recognition to the many wonderful volunteers in our community who selflessly give of their time, knowledge and skills to increase opportunities, improve the health and wellbeing of residents, and make Campaspe a great place to call home,” Campaspe Mayor, Cr Leigh Wilson, said.

“Campaspe's new Citizen of the Year, Andrew Hipwell, epitomises the qualities of generosity, kindness, passion and dedication to the greater good for which other recipients of this revered award have been renowned.”

Andrew is well-known locally for his work with young people of the Stanhope District, particularly through his involvement with Auskick. He works tirelessly to promote the program among primary school students, encouraging sport and fitness through his coaching, raising funds for equipment and resources, organising sports events and providing children with a myriad of opportunities to participate in activities, broaden their experiences and increase their love of the game.

Through his passion to provide children with interesting, inspiring and educational Auskick experiences, in just three years, the program has grown whereby almost 100 per cent of local boys and girls now participate in Auskick, with 95 per cent of
parents involved. Last year, Andrew secured the opportunity for the Stanhope Auskickers to attend an AFL match at the MCG where they participated in a half-time Auskick match and formed a guard of honour for the AFL players.

Andrew was also the driving force in mobilising a community spirit and connectedness that resulted in Stanhope being recognised as Dairy Australia's "Legendairy Capital of Australia". The $10,000 prize money was put towards installation of a playground at the local sportsground to provide a safe place for children to play and families to come together and connect.

Cr Wilson said Campaspe's new Young Person of the Year, Annette Waters, is “an exceptional role model to other young people, exhibiting the qualities of leadership, teamwork, strong values and respect for others in all that she does”.

A year 10 student at the local secondary school, Annette has already accumulated an impressive list of volunteer contributions and has participated in a broad range of community activities and pursuits. Of particular note was Annette's selection to the Victorian Government's contingent of secondary school students that travelled to Turkey to participate in the historic Anzac Day dawn service, and being chosen on behalf of all students to deliver a speech at the Premier's announcement event at Parliament House. Annette is a sought after guest speaker at local community groups and freely gives of her time to speak about and honour the sacrifices of war veterans.

Annette is also a member of the Victorian Young Carer Action Team, an inaugural member of the Rochester Leo Club helping raise funds for worthy causes, an active participant in Shire of Campaspe Youth Development program activities, is a member of several community and church groups, and actively involved in many extracurricular school programs.

The 2016 Sportsperson of the Year title was awarded to two worthy recipients - Jane Chalmers of Echuca and Naomi Cartwright of Kyabram.

"Jane Chalmers is a highly talented point guard playing at the highest level of women's basketball in the country, a pinnacle she has achieved as a result of years of hard work and dedication. But it is her natural humility and willingness to help others that also makes her popular among other aspiring sports stars," Cr Wilson said.

Jane was good at many sports growing up but women's basketball was her passion. Jane has spent over three years playing college basketball in America and now plays in the Women's National Basketball League. Jane is humble off the court but on the court, she is competitive, focussed and explosive.

While Jane is known to be modest about her career highlights she has quite a following in her local community with many young people visiting her work to meet the champion and tell her about their sporting achievements. She also shares her experiences and gives advice to others as a guest speaker to many sporting clubs across the shire.
“Naomi Cartwright is a champion golfer but is equally an outstanding community-minded person combining her many volunteering positions with her passion to provide development opportunities for junior golfers,” Cr Wilson said.

Naomi started playing golf at age seven and is now a talented golfer having won seven Ladies Club Championships and one runner up at her local Parkland Golf Club. She has undertaken the role of handicapper for nine years, and for the last two years, has been Club Handicapper, looking after the interests of 400 members.

Naomi is heavily involved in the junior golf program. As chairperson of the Junior Committee and having completed a coaching accreditation course, Naomi runs the second most popular “My Golf” program in Australia, runs the Saturday junior competition during Winter and guides her own four children, all now keen golfers. She is certainly benefitting the next generation of golfers with her extensive knowledge and experience.

“Junior Sportsperson of the Year, Zahra Hayes, has an impressive record as a regional, state and Australian champion race-walker. This, combined with her willingness to share her experiences and give advice to other up and coming young athletes, makes her a stand out,” Cr Wilson said.

Zahra has been involved with the Rochester Little Athletics Club for 10 years and while she enjoys many sports, she has excelled in race-walking to become Australia’s number one race-walker in the 5km event in the under 14 category. As one of the captains of the club, Zahra is an inspiring leader to other club members and positive role model to other young people in the broader community. While Zahra has demonstrated that achieving your goals comes from hard work and persistent dedication over time, she also shows how being involved in local sporting activities enriches your life through meeting new people and making new friendships.

“In organising, funding and hosting a Centenary Commemoration Dinner to honour the centenary of ANZAC Day, Community Event of the Year, Rochester RSL Sub-Branch, has enabled community members to gather and reflect on the sacrifices made a century ago as well as to honour those local men who contributed so much, many of whom made the ultimate sacrifice,” Cr Wilson said.

The Centenary Commemoration Dinner was sensitively delivered while harnessing the emotions of the present. The dinner featured Annette Waters, a local student who, with financial support of the sub-branch, was selected to attend Gallipoli on Anzac Day 2015. The sub-branch also announced and presented Spirit of Anzac Awards to local students and adult community members who had been selected for their personal displays of leadership, community involvement and general display of the Anzac spirit.

The Rochester RSL Sub-Branch has also organised a range of other events as well as the Dedication of the World War I memorial. The memorial represents the culmination of three years of research, public awareness raising, fund raising, working bees and channelling of community support. The memorial will provide a focus for remembrance ceremonies for many years to come.
“The committee behind Arts Group of the Year, Rochester Mural Festival Committee, was instrumental in providing a visually appealing and inspiring event for both residents and visitors to Rochester,” Cr Wilson said.

“Rochester is traditionally a transit destination with visitors passing through on their way to Echuca/Moama. The festival encouraged visitors to stop, interact with the locals and volunteers, visit the shops and view more of the local sights. This has resulted in tangible economic and social benefits for the town over an extended period of time.”

The Rochester Mural Festival, held in March 2015, saw eight artists from around Australia invited to compete against each other to paint a mural using the theme “ride like the wind”. Visitors to the festival, estimated at 2,000, were able to vote for their favourite mural. The murals remain on display for locals and passers-by to continue to enjoy.

The Rochester Mural Festival Committee, consisting of five volunteers, raised $25,000 and secured the rights to hold the event for the first time in Victoria and recruited another 52 volunteers who helped through the week-long event. The committee partnered other community groups such as the Rotary Club and Country Women’s Association to maximise the community impact and benefit of the festival.

In addition to the overall Shire of Campaspe Australia Day Award winners, the towns of Echuca, Rochester, Tongala, Rushworth and Kyabram each had their own winners who were presented at local celebrations on the day.

“I congratulate all of the 2016 Australia Day Award winners and those nominated for these prestigious awards,” Cr Wilson said.

“Our shire’s social cohesion, community resilience and economic prosperity relies upon the people who make up this community. We are therefore both proud and thankful that we have such outstanding people as yourselves in our midst, and it is a privilege to honour you all on this, our national day.”

Further information
Campaspe Shire Mayor Cr Leigh Wilson, 1300 666 535 mobile, 0429 842 111
email s.ennis@campaspe.vic.gov.au
SHIRE OF CAMPASPE - AUSTRALIA DAY AWARD WINNERS

CAMPASPE WINNERS

Citizen of the Year: Andrew Hipwell
Young Citizen of the Year: Annette Waters
Sportsperson of the Year: Jane Chalmers & Naomi Cartwright (joint)
Junior Sportsperson of the Year: Zahra Hayes
Community Event of the Year: Rochester RSL Sub-Branch – Commemoration Dinner to honour Centenary of ANZAC Day/Dedication of WW1 Memorial
Arts Group of the Year: Rochester Mural Festival Committee

ECHUCA

Citizen of the Year: Margaret Oman
Young Citizen of the Year: Kaija Pedlar
Sportsperson of the Year: Jane Chalmers
Junior Sportsperson of the Year: Archie Reid
Community Event/Group of the Year: Echuca Moama Theatre Company Inc
Arts Person/Group of the Year: Not awarded

ROCHESTER

Citizen of the Year: John Glover
Young Citizen of the Year: Annette Waters
Sportsperson of the Year: Teleah Hayes
Junior Sportsperson of the Year: Zahra Hayes
Community Event/Group of the Year: Rochester RSL Sub branch
Arts Person/Group of the Year: Rochester Mural Festival Committee

KYABRAM

Citizen of the Year: Frank Findlay
Young Citizen of the Year: Marcus Angelino
Sportsperson of the Year: Naomi Cartwright
Junior Sportsperson of the Year: Riley Ironside
Community Event/Group of the Year: “The Gift”
Arts Person/Group of the Year: Kyabram Plaza Theatre Committee

TONGALA

Citizen of the Year: Desme Cassidy
Young Citizen of the Year: Hollie Reid
Sportsperson of the Year: Alicia White
Junior Sportsperson of the Year: Amy Hammond
Community Event/Group of the Year: Lions Club of Tongala – “Bye Bye Fruit Fly”
Arts Person/Group of the Year: Lions Club of Tongala

RUSHWORTH

Citizen of the Year: Andrew Hipwell
Young Citizen of the Year: Alex Gelsi
Sportsperson of the Year: Not awarded
Junior Sportsperson of the Year: Not awarded
Community Event/Group of the Year: Rushworth SES Unit
Arts Person/Group of the Year: Ann Bell