

# Media Release

28 January 2025

## Gladstone Regional Council reveals winners of 2025 Australia Day Awards

Gladstone Regional Council has announced winners from the 2025 Australia Day Awards, held during the evening of Saturday 25 January at Gladstone Entertainment Convention Centre.

Council's Australia Day Awards recognise and reward members of the local community who have a consistent record of excellence, have made outstanding achievements in their field, and/or have contributed significantly to the growth and development of sport, community events, arts and cultural life in the region.

Nine categories were awarded at the ceremony including Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, Sport and Recreation, Young Peoples Sport and Recreation, Arts and Culture, Community Event, Community Volunteer Award, Mayor's Community Champion Award and Mayor's Young Community Champion Award.

Council also welcomed 46 new Australian citizens from 15 different countries at its Citizenship Ceremony.

### 2025 Australia Day Awards winners

**Citizen of the Year:** Alison Kelly

**Young Citizen of the Year:** Benjamin Campbell

**Sport and Recreation:** Gary Porteous and Miles Sierp

**Young Peoples Sport and Recreation Award:** Tom Crawshaw

**Arts and Culture Award:** Paulette Flint

**Community Event Award:** 2024 IOM World Championships organised by Gladstone Radio Control Yacht Club

**Community Volunteer Award:** Fred Brushe

**Mayor's Community Champion Award:** Grant Cooper

**Mayor's Young Community Champion Award:** Isabelle Asplet.

### Winner Profiles

#### **Citizen of the Year – Alison Kelly**

Alison is a dedicated volunteer in the Gladstone Region, supporting 10 non-profits and organisations. She has been a member of the Zonta Club of Gladstone for 16 years and the Gladstone Visitor Information Centre for 12 years, leading projects that assist diverse groups of women, including young women, children, seniors, and the culturally and linguistically diverse community. Alison has inspired initiatives such as breast care cushions, birthing kit workshops, 16 Days of Activism, and Zonta scholarships for disadvantaged Year 6 girls. She encourages others to step up and lead, while recognising that teamwork is essential to achieving the success she and her supporters have accomplished.

**MORE**

### **Young Citizen of the Year – Benjamin Campbell**

Benjamin is an inspiring young leader and volunteer, dedicated to his school and community. As School Captain at Toolooa State High School, he led key events, organised fundraisers, and excelled academically, receiving multiple awards including the GPC Student of the Year and the prestigious Citizenship Award from the Order of Australia. Benjamin volunteers weekly at Gladstone Hospital, supports peers through free tutoring, and works with individuals with disabilities. A committed member of the Interact Club, he has organised fundraisers and contributed to community events. Benjamin also attended the National Youth Science Forum and will return as a mentor in 2025.

### **Sport and Recreation – Gary Porteous and Miles Sierp**

Gary is a dedicated and long-standing member of the Gladstone community who has made outstanding contributions to the Gladstone Hockey Association. A generous coach and mentor, Gary has positively impacted many athletes, guiding them to success and leaving a lasting legacy with Sparks Hockey Club. In addition to this, Gary has represented Australia on the world stage, coaching the Australian Men's Over 40s Team at the Masters World Cup in South Africa. His dedication to hockey extends beyond coaching, as he consistently volunteers his time supporting the club's activities and development. Gary's ongoing support, generosity and leadership within the Gladstone hockey community has left an enduring positive impact and enriched the local sporting landscape.

Miles showcased his exceptional skills at the World Surf Life Saving Championships, representing Tannum Sands Surf Life Saving Club and achieving impressive placings that highlighted his dedication and talent in the competitive arena of surf lifesaving. His skills are evident in the surf, on the sand, and on a surf ski, as he placed inside the top 10 for the beach sprint, beach flags, and surf ski races at the Lifesaving World Championships. Miles is also a Queensland Surf Life Saving Championships medallist and finalist at the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships.

### **Young Peoples Sport and Recreation – Tom Crawshaw**

Tom took the Surf Life Saving world by storm in 2024, finishing the year draped in gold and silver medals after consistent saltwater success. His remarkable achievements – including representing Tannum Sands Surf Life Saving Club at prestigious events like the 2024 Queensland Cyclones Pool Rescue Team, Queensland State Titles, Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, and the World Surf Life Saving Championships – showcase his dedication and talent. Beyond his personal successes, Tom's encouragement and mentorship of younger athletes, motivating them to train diligently and pursue their goals, highlight his commitment to fostering a strong community within the surf club.

### **Arts and Culture – Paulette Flint**

Paulette has devoted decades of service to the Gladstone Region by researching, sharing and preserving Gladstone's rich post-colonial history. Much of our present-day understanding of Gladstone's civic history is a result of Paulette's research. Paulette generously gives her time and skills to a wide range of community organisations and events, researching local identities, speaking at community events, contributing to art exhibitions and mentoring emerging local genealogists. Paulette's mission is to unearth and preserve Gladstone's foundational stories. For more than 30 years Paulette has cultivated appreciation and enthusiasm for local history amongst the Gladstone community that is appreciated by thousands of locals.

**MORE**

# Media Release

## **Community Event Award – 2024 International One Metre (IOM) World Championships organised by Gladstone Radio Control Yacht Club**

The 2024 IOM World Championships, hosted by the Gladstone Radio Controlled Yacht Club from 20-28 October, was a resounding success, setting a new standard for international events. Despite a small membership base, the club raised \$315,000, surpassing fundraising targets. The event attracted 76 global competitors, 100 volunteers and 1500 visitors, generating \$1.1 million in local economic activity. With over 120,000 live-stream views, Gladstone was showcased globally as a premier destination for world-class events. The Championships fostered community pride, demonstrated exceptional organisation, and elevated the region's profile, leaving a legacy for future events.

## **Community Volunteer Award – Fred Brushe**

In his 40 years living in the Gladstone Region, Fred has taken great pride in volunteering with various committees. He has been a dedicated worker for the Boyne Island Lions Club, raising funds for key local and regional projects. Fred has helped raise more than \$500,000 for the construction of Bindaree Lodge Aged Care Facility and more recently has played a major role in projects such as Beach Arts Music at Millennium Esplanade. Fred is immensely proud of the work done by the small committees he supports and continues to serve the community, maintaining parks and roadways in Boyne Island and Tannum Sands on his mobility scooter.

## **Mayor's Community Champion Award – Grant Cooper**

Grant has been involved in the community for many years, selflessly donating hundreds of hours to help community groups with logos, marketing materials and advice. In 1988, Grant hosted Gladstone's local breakfast show on 4CC and later volunteered as a presenter and host for the Boyne Tannum HookUp, board member for GAPDL, and the Executive Football Department. After retiring from radio in 2006, he focused on Cooper McKenzie Marketing, continuing to support individuals and organisations across the region. Grant's past and present work has fostered many connections and celebrated the spirit of Gladstone.

## **Mayor's Young Community Champion – Isabelle Asplet**

Isabelle is a dedicated and talented member of the Gladstone community, contributing significantly to the arts and mentoring young performers. At Chanel College, she has excelled in musicals, choir, and band, representing her school at state and regional levels. Isabelle's community involvement includes roles in the Gladstone Region Combined Schools Musical, the Gladstone Mayor's Carols, and ANZAC Day choirs. She also mentors young performers through the Gladstone Performing Arts Youth Academy and the Gladstone Independent Schools Music Association. With her leadership, creativity, and passion for fostering talent, Isabelle is setting the bar high as a role model in our region.

*A replay of the 2025 Gladstone Region Australia Day Awards can be watched via Gladstone Regional Council's [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) pages.*

**ENDS**