

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Australia Day Awards 2017

27 January 2017

Graeme Harris (Citizen of the Year), Mary-Anne Pollard (Young Citizen of the Year) and the Back to Berriwillock have been honoured at Australia Day functions across Buloke.

Graeme “Pickles” Harris was honoured as Citizen of the Year in Donald, the regional centre he has spent his life helping to shape.

A successful businessman and tireless community worker, Graeme has actively worked to bring new businesses to the area and to attract professionals and tradespeople to Donald. Donald’s Industrial Estate, Kooka’s Cookies, Australian Eat Well and the travellers rests at Charlton and Sea Lake will always be viewed as lasting legacies of “Pickle’s” hard work.

As well as working on economic development in the region, Graeme has served on a number of committees in town always taking leading roles. Be it as President, Secretary or Treasurer, Donald always benefited. This includes 25 years of service to the Donald Football Club, 21 years service to Donald 2000 and 20 years service with the Donald Chamber of Commerce.

“Graeme’s progressive approach has always sought investment and economic growth, whilst at the same time focussing on jobs and community resilience. He is truly deserving of being named Citizen of the Year”, said Mayor, Cr David Pollard.



Meanwhile at Wycheproof Mary-Anne Pollard has been crowned Young Citizen of the Year. Mary-Anne, who has lived in Wycheproof all her life, is about to embark on her Year 12 studies with so much already achieved.

Last year Mary-Anne participated in the first year of the Loddon Murray Youth Leadership Program and has demonstrated leadership in her scholastic environment as both a member of her school’s Student Leadership Group and Music Captain.

A champion on and off the sporting field, Mary-Anne was the first person selected to represent Wycheproof and Buloke in the Sunraysia Regional Academy of Sport. She has represented Wycheproof P12 College in such sports as swimming, triathlon athletics and cross country. She is also a keen and

active member of the Wycheproof and District Lawn Tennis club and has assisted Mallee Sports Assembly in providing the “Hotshots” tennis program for 3 years.

“Mary-Anne has demonstrated unwavering commitment to all levels of the community in the fields of sport, music and charity work. Every year is a wonderful reminder of the quality of our young people in Buloke”, said Cr Pollard.



Finally the “Back to Berriwillock”, held on 12 and 13 March last year, has been named the Community Event of the Year. Cr David Vis was on hand to present the Berriwillock Community Development Group with their award in Berriwillock on Thursday.

The Back to Berriwillock was a large scale event requiring the whole of the community to be involved to achieve its success. As always, the Berriwillock community pulled together to ensure the event was well attended. It included a range of activities which ran seamlessly: an official opening, historical photographic display, animal nursery, major procession, musical entertainment and an ecumenical church service.

“The Back to Berriwillock” was a triumph for everybody involved. There were many great events across Buloke in the last 12 months and this is the worthy winner. There is a wonderful sense of community spirit surrounding what residents and local clubs were able to achieve. There has also been amazing feedback from those who travelled back to Berriwillock”, said Cr Pollard.

**End release**

**For further information contact Media and Communications Officer, Travis Fitzgibbon on 1300 520 520 or [tfitzgibbon@buloke.vic.gov.au](mailto:tfitzgibbon@buloke.vic.gov.au)**