CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – DR GRAHAM LAURIDSEN

Tully vet Dr Graham Lauridsen’s name is synonymous with ‘cassowary’. For many years, Graham has excelled in the support, protection and veterinary care of endangered southern cassowaries and he has also been instrumental in raising awareness about the plight of cassowaries. Graham’s efforts have resulted in strong collaborative outcomes with government departments, environmentalists, conservationists and the community.

It is due Graham's persistence and commitment that the Garners Beach Cassowary Rehabilitation Centre has stayed open, with praise from the Environment and Heritage Protection Minister Steven Miles for his work. He was also involved with World Cassowary Day at Mission Beach this year.

Graham has ensured that the survival of the cassowary is recognised by a wide range of people as being vital to the cultural, environmental and economic future of the Cassowary Coast. His passion and his work with cassowaries goes above and beyond.

Dr Graham Lauridsen is now recognised as the foremost expert on the health of cassowaries.

He also quietly continues charitable endeavours, such as volunteering at youth camps in the school holidays.

Congratulations to Dr Graham Lauridsen - the 2016 Cassowary Coast Citizen of the Year.

YOUNG CITIZEN OF THE YEAR – SANDRA VECCHIO

Sandra is a role model for her peers across the board, with her commitment to schoolwork, sportsmanship and community volunteering.

In 2015 Sandra was the Innisfail State College’s Dux of Year 10 and winner of the James Cook University bursary to encourage academic success. She was elected Year 10 leader and was an active member of the Innisfail State College student council. Through 2015, Sandra was also a cast member of the Innisfail State College musical ‘Back to the 80's’. Outside school, Sandra volunteered her time with Meals on Wheels, Feast of the Senses and the Relay for Life.

Sandra is a proven leader who has achieved outstanding academic results while also achieving in sport, representing Queensland at a national level, and committing to extra curricular activities to fulfil a busy year for a highly motivated, mature and respectful 15-year-old.
Congratulations to Sandra - the 2016 Cassowary Coast Young Citizen of the Year.

LIFETIME CONTRIBUTION - ALLAN WAKEHAM

After primary school at Bartle Frere, Alan Wakeham went to All Souls boarding school for his senior grade, then Qld University to graduate in dentistry. He then joined the RAAF. Following his discharge in 1957 Alan bought a dental practice in Rankin Street, Innisfail, where he practiced for 43 years until 2000. Alan has received recognition for serving in the Air Training Corps for nearly 30 years and being Flight Commander of Number 7 flight for 23 years.

Congratulations to Allan - 2016 Cassowary Coast Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.

LIFETIME CONTRIBUTION - OLIVE FAIRCLOUGH

Olive has made a lifetime contribution to the arts, in particular dance throughout the Innisfail and North Queensland region. Coming to Innisfail in 1972, Olive co-opened the Rhythmic School of Dance, then went on to open her own studio, Johnstone Rive Academy of Dance, and is still instructing as a life member with the Innisfail & District Ballet and Dance Society. Olive's contribution includes collaboration with the NQ Symphony Orchestra, choreographing dance productions. Olive is a member of the Innisfail Choral Society and also volunteers during the annual Innisfail Young Performers competition, other dance competitions, festivals and at studios. Her devotion to ballet has included continuing her studies as a teacher with the Royal Academy of Dance. Olive Fairclough's expertise in ballet is recognised throughout the region. She has no intention of retiring and currently has a full schedule of teaching well into 2016 and beyond.

Congratulations 'Miss Olive' - 2016 Cassowary Coast Life Time Achievement Award recipient.

LIFETIME CONTRIBUTION - ALLAN SCOTT

Allan's commitment to the community has spanned more than 70 years. Arriving in Innisfail in 1990, he has dedicated many volunteer hours to the Innisfail Bowls Club, the Innisfail Volunteer Coast Guard and in particular the Innisfail RSL where he has held many positions including being president since 2010.

Allan was instrumental in formulating the complicated process of amalgamation of the Innisfail RSL Sub Branch and its Memorial Club and was the driving force behind the spectacular 2015 ANZAC dawn service re-enactment. More than 3000 people were there to witness a simulated attack on the Johnstone riverbank to commemorate the Centenary of ANZAC Day.
COMMUNITY EVENT OF THE YEAR – 100 YEARS OF ANZAC SPIRIT

2015 marked the 100th Anniversary of the Birth of the ANZAC Spirit. Community groups across the nation were invited to commemorate this event in significant ways. After 12 months of planning, Mission Arts presented a six-month program that commemorated the contribution of the Australian and New Zealand Armed Service to our current way of life.

There were seven components to the program. One that should be particularly mentioned is the 'Weary Dunlop - Jack Chaulker POWs "Artist in Captivity' Exhibition. This was sourced and curated by Mission Arts, and was deemed nationally significant. It has now been relocated to Ballarat, and will become an integral part of the National Prisoner of War Interpretive Centre’s permanent collection.

For over 12 months Sue Pullman led a group of fellow volunteers, Ann Zamora, Dorothy Roos, Lynda Hannah, Laurie Trott and Sue Shannon. The committee worked consistently to ensure a high quality multi-faceted program, developing successful partnerships with the Tully RSL, Innisfail Historical Society, Cardwell, Tully and Wongaling Council Libraries, Tully High School, Mission Beach Lions Club, Mission Beach Rotary Club, Tully and Mission Beach girls guides, Tully Army Jungle Training base, Townsville Army Corp, Cairns RSL, Townsville RSL and other individuals and organisations locally and internationally.

Congratulations Mission Arts. Sue Pullman is accepting the award on behalf of Mission Arts - a 2016 Cassowary Coast Community Event of the Year Award recipient.

COMMUNITY EVENT OF THE YEAR – READ TO ME DAY

Read To Me Day is truly a whole-of-Tully collaboration. This day is organised by the Tully Times and supported by Tully Chamber of Commerce, Tully library, local businesses, schools and the community.

The event cleverly combines fun and fantasy while strengthening a sense of community and gently pointing out that books and reading still play an important and relevant part in daily life.

Tully comes alive on this well-organised day, with both adults and children dressing up in the Read to Me theme and flooding into the centre of Tully. Readers and story books are selected for each participating businesses and school groups move from business to business where colourful reading stations are set-up. Service clubs and the business community provide free catering for the children after their book-readings. This event provides adult community education for the young and assures children that reading really does play a huge role in their development.

This model has been so successful that other towns are now taking Tully's lead and developing their own 'Read To Me Day'. This has become a major event on the Cassowary Coast calendar and it shows that this progressive community really does care for kids.

Congratulations to John Hughes, proprietor of the Tully Times - 2016 Cassowary Coast Community Event of the Year Award recipient.
COMMUNITY EVENT OF THE YEAR – WORLD CASSOWARY DAY

World Cassowary Day 2015 was hosted by Community for Coastal and Cassowary Conservation (C4) at Mission Beach in Far North Queensland, a well-known home of the endangered, iconic bird. The event was organised by a steering committee that also included Mission Beach Cassowaries, Terrain NRM, Mission Beach Tourism, Kuranda Conservation, ABC Far North and the community.

The event attracted high-profile guests and experts, wildlife enthusiasts and the general public who enjoyed a range of environmental displays, food and entertainment in a park-like setting around C4’s environmental centre.

Terrain NRM held a threatened species forum as part of the event so that community groups, traditional owners, scientists, businesses and government came together to share knowledge and develop better solutions for the recovery of threatened species in the Wet Tropics. The program also included artwork and arts workshops, a tree planting, town parade, ABC Radio interviews and 'First Dog in the Moon' cartoonist promotions of the event.

It attracted wide media attention and served to:

- Reinforce that Mission Beach is a nature-based tourist destination
- Celebrate the exceptional natural values of the region
- Raise awareness about the endangered Southern Cassowary
- Celebrate the C4 environment centre via a family-friendly community event

Congratulations to the World Cassowary Day Steering Committee represented today by:

Peter Rowles - Community for Coastal and Cassowary Conservation (C4)
Liz Gallie and Sandal Hayes - Mission Beach Cassowaries
Tony O'Malley - Terrain NRM
Georgy Knight - Mission Beach Tourism
Paul Webster - Kuranda Conservation
ABC - North

- 2016 Cassowary Coast Community Event of the Year Award recipient.

SENIOR SPORTS AWARD – ANDREW ROSE

Andrew Rose's passion is golf and 2015 was definitely a big year.

Andrew's achievements in the past year include:
- Innisfail Golf Championship
- Innisfail Closed Championship
- Golf World Far North Region Championship

Andrew spends a significant amount of time volunteering at the Innisfail Golf Club through:

- General maintenance of club machinery and equipment
- Mowing of the course
- Green keeping
- Fundraising and general membership commitments

Andrew also spends many hours mentoring new players.

Congratulations to Andrew - the 2016 Cassowary Coast Sport Award Recipient

**YOUTH SPORTS AWARD – KELSIE ROSS**

During 2015 Kelsie was named Etty Bay Surf Life Saving Club's Under 18 Junior Surf Life Saver of the Year. This award recognises young members who have made outstanding efforts and contributions to surf lifesaving. Nominees have to not only demonstrate their involvement in patrol activities, but their contributions to the club in other facets such as fundraising, training others, sports promotion and education for the general public.

Kelsie's achievements were then considered by the North Queensland Branch of Life Saving and she was judged the North Queensland Under 18 Junior Surf Life Saver of the Year. She then progressed to a state level as a finalist.

Congratulations to Kelsie Ross - our 2016 Cassowary Coast Youth Sports Award recipient.

**SPORTS ADMINISTRATOR AWARD - JAKE ROBERTSON**

Jake Robertson has re-invigorated the Tully Cricket Club. Jack is officially the secretary and has a major role in the administration of senior cricket. However it is in the area of junior cricket that Jake stands apart. Jake has almost single-handedly re-established Tully as a cricket-playing area for juniors. His vision is to craft future local club cricketers and in conjunction with Innisfail Cricket he has recently set up an elite squad in the Cassowary Coast area so that a high level of coaching can be provided to these players on a semi-regular basis.

Jake's tireless dedication to junior cricket has provided opportunities to many.

Congratulations to Jake Robertson - our 2016 Cassowary Coast Sports Administrator Award recipient.
**SENIOR CULTURAL AWARD – MEREDITH MOREAU**

Meredith Moreau is an accomplished and renowned ceramic artist and jeweller whose work is in demand nationally.

After relocating to Mission Beach around 2000, she became actively involved in community arts, holding the position of President of Mission Beach Artists for several terms.

She recently helped establish a ceramic studio and has been teaching ceramics at the Girringun Indigenous Art Centre at Cardwell. She helped to set up a pottery group at Bingil Bay and ran ongoing sessions there.

Meredith has always been very generous in sharing her knowledge and skills with locals, helping with professional development by organising workshops with teachers from other areas and sharing her own techniques. This makes her an ideal candidate for this award.

Congratulations to Meredith Moreau - our 2016 Cassowary Cultural Award recipient.

---

**JUNIOR CULTURAL AWARD – SONYA HOWARD**

Sonya’s cultural interests culminated in 2015 in a multi-media event at Mission Arts - a solo exhibition of her fantasy sculpture and 2D work based on her self-published novel, 'Jadella Lies'.

Sonya gathered a group of friends together who designed costumes and created a film of the novel, actively raising funds to acquire skills to edit this into a completed movie. Sonya filled the gallery space with her own and her friends’ artwork and created a fantasy world with the film of 'Jadella Lies' playing during the exhibition.

Sonya is an active member of the Writers in Tropical Queensland/Licuala Group and won the N & J Vallianos Literacy Award in 2015 for her creative writing. Sonya is a great example and mentor for young people in the community and is keen to share her skills with others.

Congratulations to Sonya Howard - our 2016 Cassowary Coast Junior Cultural Award recipient.

---

**SENIOR ENVIRONMENT AWARD - NELLY & HENRY EPONG**

Nellie and Henry Epong’s passion of land and sea compelled them to establish a Turtle Triage Centre at Violets and Lace Nursery, Coquette Point, Innisfail.

The special affinity the Epong family has with turtles has helped professional researchers map nesting sites and has increased their knowledge of many facets of turtle movements. The Australian Institute of Marine Science and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority both recognise Nellie and Henry’s expertise.
An increasing number of tourists attend their turtle release days which have appeared on ABC environmental programs, attracting local school groups and even more tourists.

Congratulations to Nellie and Henry Epong - our 2016 Cassowary Coast Youth Sports Award recipients.

---

**JUNIOR ENVIRONMENT AWARD - MURRAY RIVER UPPER STATE SCHOOL**

After Cyclone Yasi the Murray River Upper State School applied for and secured a $5000 micro grant to develop a bush tucker vegetable garden. This has been a great learning experience for the students.

An interesting mix of indigenous, local and multi-cultural vegetables has been planted over four years, with the support of others including the Cassowary Coast Regional Council, Tully Men's Shed, Girringun Rangers and Biodiversity Group, and Mitre 10 Tully to name a few.

The bush tucker garden has signs with scientific and indigenous names and the uses of plants. It will be opened up to the local community and garden clubs to continue the students' learning and appreciation of planting, garden maintenance, selling produce, propagation, cooking and, of course, enjoying the produce.

Congratulations to the Students of the Murray River Upper State School - our 2016 Cassowary Coast Junior Environment Award recipient.

---

**ACHIEVEMENT AWARD - BRONWYN PHILPOT**

Bronwyn Philpot has been a driving force in Innisfail Basketball, coaching and mentoring hundreds of young people since 2003.

Bronwyn was instrumental in starting the Innisfail Basketball Inc committee which has been responsible for affiliating the competition with Qld Basketball, leading to representative opportunities for Innisfail's young athletes.

Bronwyn is also the driving force in the Diamonds in the Sky Basketball/Touch Football Tournament, held annually for the past four years in Innisfail. This tournament brings together several different agencies, government departments, community organisations and other members of the community to celebrate life, health and happiness as a way to address and prevent suicides in the community.

One of the outcomes of the Diamonds in the Sky Tournament is that local people are made aware of the trained suicide counsellors in town. Bronwyn was one of the first to sign up for the CORES of Community Response to Eliminating Suicide Program, and she delivered training sessions for a large number of people since 2012.
Congratulations to Bronwyn Philpot - our 2016 Cassowary Coast Achievement Award recipient.

ACHIEVEMENT AWARD - TRIO OF:
CHERRIL SPINA
PAT DESABBATA
ESTHER MANLY

These three women are quiet achievers. They are the backbone of the catering volunteers groups at conservation organisations including the Innisfail Reveg Unit, Community Gardens and Landcare. These women are the first to arrive and the last to leave, working hard in all weather and providing lunches for groups of between 25 and 80 people.

The success and smooth-running of local events and the retention of volunteers is due to the dedication, friendliness and ever helpful nature of these women.

Congratulations to Cherril Spina, Pat Desabbata and Esther Manly - our 2016 Cassowary Coast Achievement Award recipients.

ACHIEVEMENT AWARD - BERYL JACKSON

Beryl is an active member of both the Innisfail Lioness Club and the Innisfail Red Cross. Beryl's significant volunteer participation includes helping with pensioner morning teas, collecting donations at the Carols by Candlelight events, the Motorcycle Toy Run, Lions Annual Craft Fair and Feast of the Senses to name but a few.

Beryl is also responsible for running the Innisfail monthly markets which have increased significantly due to her helpful and caring ways.

Congratulations to Beryl Jackson - our 2016 Cassowary Coast Achievement Award recipient.

ACHIEVEMENT AWARD - SUZIE SMITH

Since arriving in the mid 1970s Suzie has become a highly active conservationist - not just in 2015 but each year.

Suzie has worked to establish local conservation groups including Alliance to Save Hinchinbrook, Friends of Ninney Rise and Wildlife Preservation Society Qld Cassowary Coast and Hinchinbrook Branches, and has been on the executive of many volunteer groups.

She is also a regular volunteer at the Cassowary Coast Regional Council's Tully Nursery Volunteer group, a trustee of the Thorsborne Trust which funds environmental research, habitat protection and environmental education. In addition she has set up an annual bursary for indigenous students in memory of her late husband Pat Turner.
Suzie has shown ongoing support to the local indigenous communities and has volunteered part of her property to Girringun as an Indigenous Protected Area.

Suzie is a perfect example of a city girl who landed unexpectedly in the country and became part of the fabric of community life.

Congratulations to Suzy Smith - our 2016 Cassowary Coast Achievement Award recipient.

**ACHIEVEMENT AWARD - JENNY BOYGE**

Jenny Boyge is a tireless volunteer in the Cassowary Coast community.

Challenged by cancer and finding it difficult to get information, Jenny founded the Tully Cancer Support Group to provide information and support to cancer patients.

The willing band of ladies that knit and crochet for the cancer group made it possible to help many cancer sufferers in places further away as well. Jenny was instrumental in getting this initiative up and running, and continues to help cancer support centres by arranging and delivering the knitted and crocheted items.

Jenny has also been a longtime volunteer at the Murray River Upper State School, and is a driver of their Bush Tucker and Vegetable Garden program. The students really enjoy and value her time, learning skills for growing sustainable gardens.

Jenny is a great asset to the school and is wonderful support for those in need.

Congratulations to Jenny Boyge - our 2016 Cassowary Coast Achievement Award recipient.

**EXCELLENCE AWARD - KATRINA McKIERNAN**

After cyclones Larry and Yasi, Katrina McKiernan's "Fruits of the Rainforest" nursery was flattened. With unfailing resilient spirit, Katrina has rebuilt, creating a better-than-ever nursery propagating, growing and supplying species and varieties of tropical fruit trees for backyard and commercial growers alike.

Her positive attitude and networking skills have made her a valuable contributor to Cassowary Coast Branch Rare Fruit Australia Inc. field days, the editing and printing of the National Rare Fruit Australia magazine and the National Rare Fruit Australia Inc AGM held in the Cassowary Coast in 2015 and bringing delegates from all over Queensland, many of whom spent extra time here.

Katrina was instrumental in Feluga State School's successful installation of a cyclone-proof trellis system, which is now covered in food plants that educate children, parents and others about healthy eating and sustainable food production in our region.

Congratulations to Katrina McKiernan - our 2016 Cassowary Coast Excellence Award recipient.
EXCELLENCE AWARD - MEGAN LUDLOW

On December 22 2015, Meagan Ludlow saved the life of a young boy at the Tully Swimming Pool. Her first aid and resuscitation training enabled her to bring the boy back after he fell unconsciousness while playing at the pool. Her bravery and quickness to act meant the boy is now safe and the attending ambulance officer said he couldn't have done a better job himself. Having a life guard with her skills within the community is an incredible asset to the Cassowary Coast community.

Congratulations to Megan Ludlow - our 2016 Cassowary Coast Excellence Award recipient.

EXCELLENCE AWARD - SANTINA BORSATO

A resident of El Arish since 1961, Santina took over the El Arish grocery shop and then in the early 1970s took over management of the local newsagency. She continued there for over 40 years and in 1993 - 23 years ago - she took over the management of the El Arish Post Office.

Even after significant post-cyclone damage Santina opened her doors to the community and it is well know that she will open her stores for extra early morning or evening services for community members in need.

Santina continually provides excellent service with a happy and helpful disposition, going out of her way to provide services to the community. El Arish is all the better for having Santina in the community.