

Australia Day Awards

26th January 2025



Australia Day is a time to reflect, respect, and celebrate—a day to recognize our extraordinary achievements. We are a community and a nation with roots that stretch back tens of thousands of years, and we have untold chapters of our story still to write. We respect the stories of others. Together we stand to celebrate our nation, our community, its achievements, and most of all its people. We are all part of the story.

The Shire of Brookton is made up of many parts, and together, we create the whole. Each of us has a role to play—within our families, within our community, and within our shared story. Today, as part of our community awards, we'll acknowledge the contributions of Kathy Bassett and the Brookton District High School P & C, celebrating the unique part they play in enriching our community.

It's also important to reflect on what's happening right here in our corner of Australia. Over the past year, we've said goodbye to some remarkable contributors to Brookton. Each of these individuals, in their own way, helped weave the fabric of our community. Some were well-known, leaving a visible legacy, while others quietly made their mark without fanfare. While I won't list names today, I want to acknowledge and honour the impact they've had on shaping Brookton into what it is today.

Communities like ours thrive on volunteers—people who give a little of themselves to make a big difference. They come from all walks of life, with varying amounts of time to offer, but their contributions are everywhere if you take a moment to look around. I encourage you to pause and think about the things you love most about living in Brookton. Then ask yourself, how many volunteers helped make those things possible? Because for me, nearly everything I love about this town exists thanks to someone who, at some point, gave their time and effort.

From the junior sports teams that nurtured our kids, to the facilities that Phillip and I enjoy all year round, to the countless initiatives that make Brookton a community of choice—volunteers made it all happen.

I've often said that my dream is for Brookton to be a community of choice for future generations. I believe, with all my heart, that it's possible. But it takes all of us. By volunteering just a little of your time, you can help ensure that Brookton remains the vibrant, welcoming community we're proud to call home.

Today is one of my favourite days of the year. Not only do we, as a family, come together to celebrate with our community, but I also have the privilege of recognizing members of our community for their remarkable contributions to Brookton. I know there are so many more people—many of whom are here today—who are equally deserving of recognition. But as I've said before, these nominations must come from you, the community.

This year, Council is delighted to award the Brookton District High School P&C Association with the Community Event of the Year Award. The P&C plays a vital role in connecting the school with parents, carers, and the broader community. They bridge the gap between administration and families, shape



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school policies, and foster positive attitudes within the school environment. Of course, many of us are most familiar with their tireless fundraising efforts, which provide much-needed resources for the students and the school.

In October, the P&C organized a mammoth Quiz Night titled *Aussie Icons*. Like many organizations in our community, it was driven by a small but dedicated group of volunteers committed to raising funds for the school while promoting it to the wider community. Local businesses and families donated prizes, and over 100 people from near and far dressed as their favourite Aussie icons—fully embracing the chance to have fun and give back.

The event was the first major gathering after the initial refurbishments at the Town Hall. It was a night filled with laughter, friendship, and a shared goal to support Brookton District High School students. That evening, this group of volunteers raised an incredible \$3,500.

Each year, we also honour an individual who has made an extraordinary difference in our community. Sometimes they're larger-than-life personalities; other times, they're quiet achievers whose contributions only become clear when someone takes the time to document them. That was exactly my reaction when I received the nomination for this year's Citizen of the Year, Kathy Bassett. When I called Kathy to congratulate her, I said, "Wow, Kathy, what a contribution you have made." Now let me share with you why her impact is truly remarkable.

Kathy moved to Brookton in 1978 and established a successful hair salon, which she ran for 10 years. Like many great Brookton stories, she met a handsome young farmer at tennis. They married in 1980 and raised three beautiful children together.

Over the past 47 years, Kathy has been deeply involved in our community. She joined the Brookton Performing Arts (formerly the Choral Society) in 1984, became a committee member in 1985, and served as treasurer from 1986 to 1990. Her roles have included acting, singing, playing instruments, and serving as the musical director since 2004. Kathy's tireless work on choral harmonies, piano accompaniments, and much more has inspired everyone around her.

Kathy is also a strong supporter of Friends of Kalkarni, currently serving as Secretary. Her dedication to caring for residents and making them feel special is a true testament to her kindness. In addition, Kathy has been the organist at St Mark's Anglican Church since 2004 and arranges singers for Christmas Carol services. She's always ready to step in and help, and she currently serves as Secretary of the St Mark's Anglican Guild.

Kathy and her husband Graeme have been passionate members of the Brookton Tennis Club for many years. Kathy coordinated Junior Tennis whilst her children were young and served as Ladies Captain from 1994 to 1996. She's also been involved with the Brookton Girl Guides, the Brookton District High School Pre-Primary Committee, and the Brookton Women's Hockey Club, where she was a premiership player and a committed team member.



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From 1996 to 2010, Kathy was the canteen manager for the Brookton Pingelly Football Club, supporting juniors, colts, and senior football teams.

In the words of her nominators, *"The Brookton community is blessed to have such a lovely, happy, and talented person in Kathy. Her willingness to strive for good outcomes and support the community unconditionally is truly inspiring."*

The Brookton community congratulates and thanks Kathy for all she has given to us.

As we all know days like today do not magically happen, there is a lot of work that goes into what you see here. Firstly, to the Shire Administration, Deanne Sweeney, Kylie Freeman and your staff, thank you. Your ongoing commitment to provide opportunities to our community is commended. This year the Shire of Brookton was successful in a grant application to the Australia Day Council for \$10,000, so all the activities here today and at the pool later have been supported by the Australia Day Council Community Events Grant Program. To Anne Stedman & Kate Walker and your band of merry helpers thank you, it has been the greatest pleasure to work alongside of you for what I think is the best part of 15 years. You're ongoing commitment to the community of Brookton but in particular our girls, is inspiring and appreciated by us all. Please put your hands together for everyone that has helped.

Finally, to you the Community thank you, it is has been the greatest privilege to stand here before you for the last 8 Australia Days, we really are the sum of our whole, a community to be celebrated, a community we can all be extremely proud to call home. So, for my last Australia Day as your Shire President and Elected member I leave you with the following:

The Story of Australia, it is the story of me, it is the story of you, it is the story of we. In parts it is painful, in parts it is raw, in others its beautiful Inspiring great awe. It tells of many people from far and wide, and those who have been here since the beginning of time. It brings us together and tears us apart, we all have our views So where do we start? By listening to each other and sharing our part.

Together by acknowledging each other's story we can build a strong and resilient community, a community that is vibrant, engaging, and welcoming, a community of choice. I look forward to 2025 with optimism that together we can achieve our collective goals.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "K Crute".

Katrina Crute
Shire President



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