

## **SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD FINALISTS ANNOUNCED**

The South Australian finalists for the 2010 Australian of the Year, Senior Australian of the Year, Young Australian of the Year and Australia's Local Hero Awards include one of Australia's best loved cooks, a shearer, a volunteer fire fighter and an orphanage mother.

There are four finalists in each award category and recipients will be announced at the SA Australian of the Year Awards presentation on Wednesday 11 November 2009 in Adelaide.

The South Australian recipients will then join recipients from all other States and Territories as finalists for the national awards. The national awards will be announced on 25 January 2010 in Canberra and will mark the Anniversary of the Australian of the Year Awards program.

Ms Tam Johnston, Program Director at the National Australia Day Council, said the diversity of the South Australian finalists this year reflected the many different role models in the Australian community.

"We all have different notions of heroes and inspirational role models and this year's South Australian finalists really demonstrate that," said Ms Johnston.

"Many of the finalists are people who quietly help others or have been giving to others their entire lives, while others are respected for their extraordinary achievements."

The South Australian finalists are:

### **SA AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR**

Dr Lynn Arnold AO - *Humanitarian worker (Adelaide)*  
Julian Burton OAM - *Charity founder (Adelaide)*  
Geraldine Cox AM - *Orphanage mother (Glenalta)*  
Cate Fowler - *Theatre practitioner (Adelaide)*

### **SA SENIOR AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR**

Maggie Beer - *Cook and restaurateur (Nurioopta)*  
Brian Butler AM - *Stolen generations campaigner (Heathfield)*  
Tony Hutchison - *Radio educationalist (Kingston)*  
Dr James Martin - *Paediatric thoracic and sleep physician (Myrtle Bank)*

### **SA YOUNG AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR**

Felishia Abbott - *Fundraiser (North Adelaide)*  
Scott Bradbrook - *Youth volunteer (Munno Para)*  
Danielle Catanzariti - *Actor (Murray Bridge)*  
Johnathon Dalla - *Sheep shearer (Warooka)*

### **SA LOCAL HERO**

Edgar Agius OAM - *Maltese community advocate (Findon)*  
Mike Coddington - *Volunteer fire fighter (Murray Bridge)*  
Michael Cook - *Community volunteer (Berri)*  
Rosemary McKenzie-Ferguson - *Workplace injury support worker (Royal Park)*

For more information on the Australian of the Year Awards visit [www.australianoftheyear.org.au](http://www.australianoftheyear.org.au).

### **Ends.**

Finalist bios attached with this media release or downloadable from [www.australianoftheyear.org.au](http://www.australianoftheyear.org.au)  
For further information or to arrange an interview please contact:

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## SOUTH AUSTRALIA FINALISTS

### of the Year

#### **Dr Lynn Arnold AO - Humanitarian worker**

As Chief Executive of Anglicare SA, Dr Lynn Arnold oversees South Australia's largest non-government agency involved in aged care, welfare delivery and community development. Prior to taking on this role he served in a number of roles with World Vision, including as Senior Director for World Vision International. For 15 years from 1979 he served as an MP in the South Australian Parliament and was Premier during 1992–1993. This year he was appointed one of three inaugural Reconciliation Ambassadors.

#### **Julian Burton OAM - Charity founder**

When Julian Burton suffered life-threatening injuries in the 2002 Bali Bombings he was inspired to give back to the people who gave their time, skills, and generosity in supporting not only him, but many others less fortunate than him. From his personal experience, Julian knew burn injuries were devastating both emotionally and physically. So in 2003, Julian founded the Julian Burton Burns Trust which has become Australia's first national community organisation solely committed to prevention, care and research associated with burn injury.

#### **Geraldine Cox AM - Orphanage mother**

Following a visit to a Cambodian orphanage in 1993, Geraldine Cox founded the Sunrise Children's Village. She now runs two orphanages and is building a new centre for children suffering from HIV. In 1999, in a Royal Decree, King Norodom Sihanouk bestowed Geraldine with Cambodian citizenship, a rare honour. Affectionately known as 'Big Mum', Geraldine's energy, commitment and joy for life has changed the lives of thousands of Cambodian children.

#### **Cate Fowler - Theatre practitioner**

Cate Fowler is a theatre producer and director specialising in work for children and family audiences. Cate founded Windmill Performing Arts which quickly became the number one company in Australia for children's and family theatre. She also researched the effects of the arts on young children, the results of which led her to pioneer "installation theatre" targeted at children aged 12-months to four years old. Cate's involvement with the theatre has helped provide an inspiring environment for children of all ages to express themselves.

### Senior Australian of the Year

#### **Maggie Beer - Cook and restaurateur**

Maggie Beer is an Australian culinary icon. She and her husband, Colin, ran the famed Pheasant Farm Restaurant, before Maggie opened an export kitchen for the production of preservative-free gourmet foods. In 1999, she opened Maggie Beer's Farm Shop and went on to co-host the ABC cooking program, *The Cook and the Chef*. Maggie Beer hopes that through sharing her love of food she will inspire Australians to reconnect with food and appreciate what we eat.

#### **Brian Butler AM - Stolen Generations campaigner**

Brian Butler is a respected Aboriginal elder who has been a constant driver behind the Stolen Generations case. He was the founding chair of the Stolen Generations Alliance and an inaugural member of the Aboriginal and Islander Healing Foundation. He spent 20 years as director of the South Australian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, was ATSIC Commissioner for South Australia, and spent 14 years as chair of the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care which initiated the *Bringing Them Home* report.

#### **Tony Hutchison - Radio educationalist**

Tony Hutchison is a radio enthusiast who saw the opportunity to stimulate the minds of students by enabling them to speak to astronaut crews in space. In 1999, Amateur Radio on International Space Station (ARISS) was formed and Tony was selected as one of nine approved Satellite Earth Stations in the world to handle private and educational linkups with astronauts. Tony, along with the ARISS International team has now linked more than 490 schools and youth groups around the world to the International Space Station.

### **Dr James Martin - Paediatric thoracic and sleep physician**

As Director of the Department of Respiratory and Sleep Medicine and Director of the Cystic Fibrosis Service at the Women and Children's Hospital, Dr James Martin has helped thousands of South Australian families manage their children's respiratory disease. He established the Sleep Study unit at the hospital because of a need to understand more about children's sleep patterns and how it impacts their growth and health. Dr Martin is highly esteemed by his colleagues and much loved by his patients.

### **Young Australian of the Year**

#### **Felishia Abbott, 29 - Fundraiser**

After surviving ovarian cancer Felishia Abbott wanted to give back to the team at Flinders Medical Centre who had supported her through the experience. So she established *Footing it for Flinders*, a fundraising initiative for the Flinders Medical Centre Foundation in aid of the Flinders Centre for Innovation in Cancer - the first integrated cancer centre in South Australia. Felishia has already raised \$85,000 by organising 20 women to take part in a five-day trek to raise awareness and funds.

#### **Scott Bradbrook, 25 - Youth volunteer**

For the last five years Scott Bradbrook has volunteered his time to Northern Carers, both helping the elderly and working in the op shop which raises funds for the organisation. Scott is a member of the Peachey Belt Youth Committee, which encourages young people to stay informed about what's happening in their area, and gives them the opportunity to volunteer in the community. At 25 years of age, Scott Bradbrook exudes kindness and proves that volunteering at any age is an achievement to be proud of.

#### **Danielle Catanzariti, 17 - Actor**

Danielle started acting at the age of 10 and scored the lead role alongside Toni Collette in *Hey, Hey It's Esther Blueburger*, in 2006. From there her career took off. She starred with Natalie Imbruglia in her second film *Elise*, and was then handpicked by Cate Blanchett for the dark play, *Blackbird*. In 2008 she received the AFI Young Actor Award. At the young age of 17 Danielle has already demonstrated that she is an exceptional new talent of both stage and screen.

#### **Johnathon Dalla, 21 - Sheep shearer**

At age 12 Johnathon Dalla developed a passion for blade shearing, and followed his passion through highschool. He has since won many prizes at shearing competitions both nationally and internationally. At just 20 Johnathon became the Australian Blade Shearing Champion, and returned from a six-week shearing contract in Ireland with the title of Irish Blade Shearing Champion. Johnathon is always willing to share his knowledge and love of the industry.

### **Local Hero**

#### **Edgar Agius OAM, Findon - Maltese community advocate**

Edgar Agius is President of the Maltese Community Council of South Australia, and a member of the Maltese Guild of South Australia, of which he was president for several years. In the 1990s he served as president and coordinator of the Maltese Language and Folk Dancing School of Adelaide. He was elected to Local Government in 2000 as Councillor for Beverley Ward and is currently serving his third term in office. His work has greatly contributed to the vitality of the Maltese community.

#### **Mike Coddington, Murray Bridge - Volunteer fire fighter**

In 1993, Mike Coddington joined the Murray Bridge Country Fire Service Brigade as a volunteer, and for the last eight years he has been the Brigade Captain. During this time he has increased membership from eight to 24 active fire fighters, and upgraded the brigade to a Hazchem incident response brigade. He works more than 1500 voluntary hours every year. Mike's leadership and mentoring has created a dedicated and professional group of volunteer fire fighters.

#### **Michael Cook, Berri - Community volunteer**

For the past 12 years Michael Cook has been involved as a team leader in Operation Flinders, an organisation dealing with kids at risk. Michael has also been a Rotary Club member since 1995 and a St John's Ambulance paramedic. In 2006, he was named the Paul Harris Fellow, the highest Rotary Club award. Michael has always been driven to better his community and is a true team player.

**Rosemary McKenzie-Ferguson, Royal Park - Workplace injury support worker**

After being injured in the workplace Rosemary McKenzie-Ferguson founded Work Injured Resource Connection to empower the work-injured through practical and emotional support. On call 24 hours a day, she attends case conferences, medical appointments and cases at trial at the request of injured workers. She also organises the International Day of Mourning to commemorate fatally injured workers and created a memorial park in Bonython Park. Rosemary continues to provide support to many Australians and helps give injured workers a voice.