



## 2025 Australia Day Awards

South Gippsland Shire Council would like to acknowledge and thank all of this year's award nominees and congratulate our 2025 Citizen of the Year Ian Rasumssen, Young Citizen of the Year Charlotte Ogden and Community Event of the Year 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeniyen Tavern Night.

Ian and Charlotte were recognised for their significant community achievements along with four other Citizen of the Year nominees – Colin Murray, Dianne Kiddell, John Davies and Marge Arnup – at an awards ceremony held at the Meeniyen Mechanics Institute Hall on Wednesday 15 January. There were no other nominees for the Young Citizen of the Year category.

Ian's contributions to the South Gippsland community spans over many decades, providing dedication and service to numerous club's organisation and committees including, but not limited to; Young Farmer, Berrys Creek Hall Committee, Leongatha Probus Club, Leongatha Horticulture Society, Lions Club and Leongatha Senior Citizens. He is an integral part of these groups providing exceptional leadership and making sure the general governance runs smoothly. In addition to this, Ian has been responsible for preserving the heritage of these groups, contributing his time and ability to so many organisations.

At such a young age, Charlotte has set the bar high with her calibre of work. She has represented South Gippsland at the Victorian Youth Congress, playing a vital part in the co-creation of the Victorian Youth Strategy. She has also completed training and advocacy work in the Youth Climate Coalition, sharing her passion and drive for the environment and ecosystem regeneration. As well as volunteering at the 1<sup>st</sup> Inverloch Scout Group, Charlotte proven to be an outstanding young person in our community.

The Community Event of the Year category featured a broad range of events, highlighting the uniqueness of South Gippsland. The nominees were Mirboo North Italian Festa, 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeniyen Tavern Night, Poowong 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, 2024 Fish Creek Tea Cosy Festival and Commemorate Flags Marking Veterans Graves. The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeniyen Tavern Night celebrated Meeniyen's vibrant community spirit and provided a platform for local talent. 14 September 2024, marked the events special milestone, showcasing the diverse entertainment that has flourished over the decades. The Tavern Nights foster a sense of belonging, bringing together residents and visitors. They offer young performers their first stage experience, nurturing local talent and creating

lasting memories. This year's anniversary event drew 210 attendees, a testament to its enduring appeal.

To read the achievements of all our nominees and to see upcoming Australia Day events near your please visit [www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/australiaday](http://www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/australiaday)

**Quote attributable to South Gippsland Shire Council Mayor, John Schelling:**

*"I would like to share a huge congratulations to our 2025 Citizen of the Year Ian Rasmussen, Young Citizen of the Year Charlotte Ogden and Community Event of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeniyan Tavern Night, and all the award nominees.*

*"Last night was all about celebrating some of South Gippsland's most outstanding residents. Listening to the remarkable contributions of this year's nominees fills me with immense pride to be a South Gippslander and every year, we are lucky enough to hear about a few more of these spectacular people. Thank you to those who put in nominations. I urge people to please continue letting us know about those who go above-and-beyond for South Gippsland – we love to hear about them!"*

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