

Monday 26 January 2015

FOR SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY
2015 Citizen of the Year – Dr Peter Mitchell OAM
2015 Young Citizen of the Year – Aidan Fisher

At an Australia Day ceremony today, the Mayor, Cllr Bill Pickering, announced the 2015 City of Ryde Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the Year, in recognition of their service to the local community. The recipients are:

Dr Peter Mitchell OAM – Citizen of the Year
Aidan Fisher – Young Citizen of the Year

In acknowledging their outstanding contributions, Cllr Pickering said the two winners exemplified the character and fine qualities of the people who make up the City of Ryde.

“Dr Mitchell and Aidan deserve the admiration of the community and to be acknowledged as role models,” the Mayor said.

“Through their deeds and actions, both winners have added enormous value to our city and to the lives of so many in our local community. They lead by example and show that community spirit is thriving in the City of Ryde.”

Citizen of the Year - Dr Peter Mitchell OAM

Dr Peter Mitchell OAM is a highly respected environmental scientist with a local, national and international reputation.

He has committed decades of service to the community, through education and promoting public awareness of the natural environment, conservation and our local heritage.

Peter Mitchell is best known to the Ryde community through his work as a Member of the City of Ryde Heritage Advisory Committee and his part in locating the grave site of Woollaware Bennelong, one of the most significant figures in Australian history. He assisted in the assembly of the educational website findingbennelong.com and also helped catalogue all local heritage items.

He combines his passions for Bennelong, geomorphology, and all things ‘Ryde’, as a popular guest speaker at historical associations, environmental groups, schools and clubs giving expert insights on the Ryde local area and the importance of Bennelong in our nation’s history. He also holds field days and advises Ryde and other Councils on a range of environmental issues.

Peter was Gladesville District Probus Club President in 2013 and 2014 and among other initiatives was instrumental in the acquisition of an automated external defibrillator for the Putney Tennyson Bowling Club.

People say that if Dr Peter is around and there is job to be done – be it mowing the lawn, fixing a complex piece of machinery, or volunteering at his grand daughter's school - then the job will get done.

From 1974 Peter Mitchell held various academic positions at Macquarie University and other teaching institutions. He retired in 1998 as Associate Professor and Head of Department of Physical Geography at Macquarie and was awarded the Order of Australia medal in 2013.

Young Citizen of the Year - Aidan Fisher

As a member of Ryde Youth Council, Aidan has helped local youth deal with hardship such as unemployment and mental health.

His inspirational drive and innovative leadership style resulted in the staging of the Ryde Youth Summit, an event that brought together hundreds of local young people to address issues such as mental health problems, bullying and substance abuse.

He also helped that organise the Ryde Apprenticeship and Traineeship Expo, in partnership with Ryde Council, to tackle youth unemployment in the Ryde area by providing contacts with local business and providing alternative career pathways.

Aidan also introduced the global-focused Ryde Model United Nations event during National Youth Week and was involved as a volunteer in other community events that give a voice to young people, such as the annual Granny Smith Festival.

He is a Mentor at Macquarie, a past member of Epping Eastwood Tigers and received NSW Clubs Student Volunteer of the Year Award.

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