

Namoi Valley

# Independent

Tuesday, January 29, 2008 \$1.20 including GST

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Serving Gunnedah and district



HEATHER Welch, Principal of GS Kidd School, accepts the Community Achievement Award from Gunnedah's Australia Day Ambassador Dr Anthony Pun OAM. Also congratulating Mrs Welch and GS Kidd, are Mayor Gae Swain, left, and Cr Steven Smith, right.

## GS Kidd School takes out Community Achievement

THE GS Kidd Memorial School is a unique education facility offering a comprehensive program for children with varying degrees of intellectual and physical disabilities combining literacy, numeracy, artistic, creative and life skills with the emphasis of maximising the personal development of each and every student.

The school was a worthy winner of the Community Achievement Award.

The students work under the care and guidance of wonderfully dedicated and compassionate teachers, carers and ancillary staff who work above and beyond the call of duty in developing the individual skills of each child.

Unlike mainstream class style education, each GS Kidd student needs a special program and one-on-one inputs in order to optimise the different abilities of each pupil.

Life skills that society take for granted such as shopping, cooking, banking, are a very important part of the program.

Supporting the school is a large number of community volunteers who provide a huge range of special opportunities for the students including music, theatre, art, swimming, riding, archery and sport.

The volunteers state they gain just as much from their interaction with the students and sharing in the joys of achievements as the students themselves gain from these special activities.

Some students go on to either full-time or part-time mainstream education while the majority complete their tenure at GS Kidd until age 19 when they graduate with a special Higher School Certificate which recognises their achievements across a wide range of skills in keeping with their individual abilities.

Work experience in the community is an important and valuable part of the program.

The teachers, staff and the large band of volunteers from the GS Kidd School deserve recognition for their huge contributions in enhancing the lives and providing opportunities for a group of very special children.



LONG-SERVING volunteer Shirley Morrison, was nominated for the Evelyn Wise Memorial Citizen Award and the Eve Turner Perpetual Award for senior citizens, in memory of Gordon Turner.

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Breanna is  
our Young  
Citizen

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Raft and  
Craft race

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Magic  
Millie sets  
new mark

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## Dr Deane, Citizen of the Year

*'This town is a wonderful town and I don't want to live anywhere else ...'*

*Gunnedah Citizen of the Year, Dr Grahame Deane*

GUNNEDAH GP Dr Grahame Deane was named Gunnedah Citizen of the Year at Friday night's Australia Day celebration dinner at the PCYC.

Dr Deane received the award in the 40 years and over category for his 26 years service and dedication to the Gunnedah community.

Dr Deane has been principal GP and hospital VMO in Gunnedah providing obstetric, surgical and anaesthetic care for the Gunnedah community.

He received his award from Gunnedah's Australia Day Ambassador Dr Anthony Pun, before a crowd of close to 300 people.

During the evening, eight awards for community service were presented with Breanna Southome taking out the Young Citizen (21 and under).

In accepting the award, Dr Deane said he and his wife Karen would celebrate 26 years in Gunnedah on Australia Day.

"When we came to Gunnedah in 1992 we sat on top of Porcupine Lookout and made a decision to stay for eight years.

"I now find I have spent half my life in Gunnedah and we have raised our children here and we couldn't be happier.

"My children have come home tonight to be a part of this special occasion.

"We came to Gunnedah in the middle of a drought and we have seen more droughts, floods, locust plagues, mine closures, and shops

and businesses in the main street close.

"Gunnedah has not bounced back from these setbacks, its has fought back, and that is what makes it a wonderful town."

Dr Deane said he was immensely proud to live in Gunnedah and be able to serve the community.

"This town has a future, businesses in the town know this and know the town is going ahead.

"We have a future because of the wonderful people who can see that future and who are prepared to have a go.

"These people gave this town a chance and we must do the same.

"I don't want to live anywhere else."

Dr Deane then focused on rural communities, which he pointed out have been doing it tough.

"At times the rural sector is being treated as second rate citizens.

"Let's stand up for a fair go and demand we get it," he added.

Dr Deane then thanked his wife Karen, who he said was both 'mother and father' to their children.

"The role of a GP is the best role anyone could ever take on and is what being a true doctor is all about.

"Being a rural doctor means partaking of your lives, it is a great opportunity and a wonderful calling.

Dr Deane also thanked Mayor Gae Swain for her support and contribution in all areas of health.

"I thank everyone for their support and for giving me this award, it is both an honour and a privilege.

Cecily Maxwell was awarded the Eve Turner Perpetual Award in memory of Gordon Turner while young Gunnedah High school ensemble Cantabile took out the Cultural Award.

The GS Kidd Memorial School won the community Achievement Award.

Judy Henderson took out the prestigious Ossie and Beryl Campbell Memorial Volunteer of the Year award for her many years dedicated service to the Pony Club while Naomi Hobson received the Ivan Towns Memorial Award.

Radio Station 2MO/Trip-O won the Business Award.

Highlights of the evening were the speech by Australia Day Ambassador, Dr Anthony Pun, which focused on his perception of multiculturalism, and the welcome by Mr Cliff Griffen, a speech delivered in the Gamlarasy and English languages.

Certificates of Appreciation were also presented to each nominee in each category and a special prize for the best decorated table which was taken out by the High School.

Sue Etheridge provided a stirring rendition of the National Anthem and Mayor Gae Swain said Grace.

Lloyd Angel once again proved to be a consummate Master of Ceremonies.



GUNNEDAH'S Australia Day celebration cake couldn't have been in better hands. Gunnedah's Citizen of the Year, Dr Grahame Deane, right, assists Australia Day Ambassador Dr Anthony (call me Tony) Pun OAM to 'make a surgeon's incision.'

## Three newest Aussies sign up on Australia Day



GUNNEDAH'S new Australian citizens with Mayor Gae Swain and General Manager Robert Campbell. From left Anthony Attard, Deborah Batchelor and Joanna Donaldson.

**THREE** Gunnedah residents formally became Australian citizens on Australia Day.

Anthony Attard, Deborah Batchelor and Joanna Donaldson took the citizenship pledge at a ceremony held at Wolseley Park.

Gunnedah Shire Council General Manager Robert Campbell addressed the new citizens, with Mayor Gae Swain leading the group through the citizenship pledge.

The new Australian citizens were then each presented with a native shrub from Grey Power representative Rita McPherson.

Each of the new citizens said they were proud to be officially recognised as an Australian.

Joanna Donaldson came to the country as a backpacker from England 11 years ago.

She met her future husband while working and now owns a family day care centre.

She is also a proud foster mother.

Joanna decided to take the pledge after friendly pressure from her husband, so that she could "cheer for the right team."

Anthony Attard left Malta with his parents in 1954 to come to Australia.

He spent a career in truck driving and describes becoming an Australian citizen as 'fantastic'.

"I always wanted to do it

and I finally got it done, after a push from my wife," he said.

Deborah Batchelor was born in the US and has spent 47 years living in Australia after coming with her parents at age four.

She came to Gunnedah when her husband became the manager of local radio station 2MO.

Deborah currently works at Gunnedah Nursing Home, and became a citizen because she 'thought it was time'.

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YOUNG Citizen of the Year Breanna Southome with Dr Anthony Pun

## Breanna is our Young Citizen

**SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD Breanna Southome is Gunnedah's Young Citizen of the Year.**

Breanna has demonstrated commitment, not only to her academic achievements, but also through her voluntary contributions to the Gunnedah community.

For many years, Breanna has been a member of the Singing Cousins, a singing group which regularly entertained for many organisations, from the frail aged at the nursing homes, to the View club, the Salvation Army, as well as being the opening act for Mr Gunnedah in 2005.

Breanna is a regular entertainer on the Ann Kidd Memorial Concert which raises money for leukaemia and cancer research.

Breanna is also a well known public speaker. From a young age she was a regular Eisteddfod participant, winning prepared speech sections during primary school which led on to her achievements at high school.

Breanna was the Year 10 Len Ford winner as well as a finalist in Year 7 and 9.

She recently represented Gunnedah High in the Rotary West Public Speaking Competition in which she now advances to represent the district in March. Breanna was runner-up in the Apex Public Speaking Competition in 2007.

Breanna also represents Gunnedah and her

She is a member of the Gunnedah High School Girls' Open Touch team and also plays in the local competition. She was also involved in the dance group who performed at the North West Dance Festival, CAPERS and Massed Choir.

In her final year of primary education Breanna was elected as a prefect at Gunnedah South School.

She attained a high distinction in the Australian Schools' English competition which saw her invited to the Australian Primary Talent Search, initiated by the Gifted Education Research, Resource and Information Centre (GERRIC).

At High School Breanna has been a member of the School Representative Council and will be a leader in the Peer Support program this year.

In her end of year results for Year 10, Breanna received numerous awards including the Bill McDonagh Award for Outstanding Student Year 10, Platinum Award, CAPA Award and Award for Excellence in English and Public Speaking.

She also attained eight As on her School Certificate which is an outstanding achievement.

As well as Breanna's busy schooling life she manages to serve the community in her part-time employment as an assistant at the local newsagent.