

# NORTHERN MIDLANDS CELEBRATES COMMUNITY, CULTURE & COUNTRY ON AUSTRALIA DAY 2026

The Northern Midlands community gathered at the Campbell Town Recreation Ground to celebrate Australia Day 2026 with a ceremony recognising local achievement, welcoming new citizens, and honouring First Nations heritage. Hosted by Mayor Mary Knowles, the event included an Acknowledgement of Country for the tyerrnotepanner people of the pantukina area and a Citizenship Ceremony welcoming new Australians to the region. Australia Day Ambassador John Zeckendorf, the first Tasmanian to summit Mount Everest, inspired the crowd with reflections on resilience, service and community spirit.

Volunteers from across the Northern Midlands—including the Pink Supporters, Rossarden Landcare Group, and Avoca Museum and Information Centre—were also honoured for their outstanding contributions. Following the ceremony, guests enjoyed a community BBQ and viewed the Choose the Scenic Route photography exhibition. Mayor Knowles thanked all volunteers, award recipients, dignitaries, and attendees for helping create a day that “reflects the unity, generosity and community pride of the Northern Midlands.”

## Award Highlights

- Event of the Year: Campbell Town Football Club ANZAC Day Match
- Young Citizen of the Year: Sophie Bartlett
- Citizen of the Year: Bill Williams

## CELEBRATING AN INSPIRING YOUNG LEADER

The Northern Midlands Council congratulates Sophie Bartlett on being named Young Citizen of the Year 2026. We celebrate her achievements, applaud her dedication, and look forward to seeing her continue to inspire our community.

### A Rising Star in Athletics

Sophie's sporting accomplishments are remarkable. She has proudly represented Tasmania at the National All Schools Championships, placing 9th in discus and shot put and earning an 11th place call up in javelin. At the state level, she secured 1st place in discus and 2nd in shot put at the All Schools Tasmania Under 15 girls competition. Her dedication, discipline, and passion for athletics make her an inspiring role model for young people across the Northern Midlands.

### Committed to Community

Sophie's impact goes far beyond her own achievements. She is a senior participant and mentor in Little Athletics, supporting younger athletes as they build their confidence and skills. She also volunteers in the Longford Football Club canteen and has been an active player in the girls' football side for several seasons, demonstrating teamwork, reliability, and a strong community spirit. She actively promotes Longford as a welcoming and vibrant place to live, encouraging friends and family to become part of the community she cares so deeply about.



ABOVE: Young Citizen of the Year 2026 Sophie Bartlett with Mayor Mary Knowles OAM

## ANZAC DAY MATCH: 2026 EVENT OF THE YEAR

The Campbell Town Football Club ANZAC Day Match has been named the 2026 Event of the Year. This year's award criteria placed a strong focus on events that embody community spirit, attract a broad cross-section of locals and visitors, and generate positive publicity for the region. The ANZAC Day Match not only met these expectations but exceeded them. The event drew crowds of more than 2,000 people for both reserve and senior fixtures. Families, veterans, community groups and travelling supporters came together in a powerful display of unity and remembrance.

Players wore ANZAC-themed guernseys as a tribute to service men and women, and the presentation of ANZAC Spirit Medals to standout players from each team further reinforced the values of sacrifice, mateship and integrity. With the club now working to establish the ANZAC Day Match as an ongoing annual tradition, the event has already cemented its place as a touchstone of community participation in the Northern Midlands. This year's recognition confirms the match as not only a sporting highlight but a meaningful acknowledgment of the region's heritage and community spirit.



LEFT: David Nicolson, Clinton Burn, Kade Lowe, Elizabeth Webber, Paul Jones, Laura Burn, David Gatenby OAM, Jodi Ashman and Mayor Mary Knowles OAM for Event of the Year 2026

## BILL WILLIAMS NAMED CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

The Northern Midlands community is celebrating one of its most dedicated and respected residents, with Bill Williams officially named Citizen of the Year 2026. For decades, Bill has been a quiet but unwavering force behind many of the region's most valued clubs, events and community services. His contribution stretches across sport, public safety, emergency response and grassroots community life—leaving a lasting legacy in both Cressy and Longford.

### A Lifetime of Service

Bill's commitment to community began early and has never wavered. Over seven years as Treasurer of the Cressy Football Club, he guided the club through important growth, spearheaded fundraising programs, and contributed countless hands on hours maintaining facilities and supporting players and families. As a local policeman for over 40 years, Bill became a trusted and compassionate presence in Cressy and Longford. Known for his fairness and calm approach, he placed community wellbeing above all else—often ensuring residents got home safely. His professionalism earned him multiple commendations, including for disarming an armed and distressed individual and for his role in ending a significant crime spree.

### Leadership Behind Local Icons

As President of the Longford Show for a decade and now life member, he played an instrumental role in keeping the event running smoothly—repairing infrastructure, coordinating volunteers and helping preserve the show as a highlight on the local calendar. He has also served six years with the Tasmanian Fire Service as a volunteer and continues to support local causes as the long serving Secretary of the Connerville Hunters Club, a position he has held for more than 14 years. Mayor Mary Knowles OAM described Bill as “a true community champion whose decades of commitment have strengthened the fabric of the Northern Midlands.”



ABOVE: Deputy Premier Guy Barnett, Citizen of the Year 2026 Bill Williams & Mayor Mary Knowles OAM

## AUSTRALIA DAY GALLERY



- 1 Choose the Scenic Route Finalists and Winner Marcus Rodrigues with Deputy Prime Minister Guy Barnett
- 2 BBQ cooked by the Campbell Town Football Club supported by Banjos, Swifts and Harcourts
- 3 New Australian Yi Sin with her partner and father

## CONTACT US

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## OPENING HOURS

Monday - Friday

8:45am - 4:30pm

