



26 January 2024

## Australia Day Award Winners

Warren Shire has recognised the contribution of several outstanding citizens, with the presentation of this year's Australia Day Awards on Friday 26 January 2024.

Taking out the prestigious 2024 Citizen of the Year Award was once again committed community leader Frances Evans, whose work bringing musical events to Warren and creating opportunities for young people to develop their talents has put Warren Shire on the musical map.

Award winners across all categories were recognised for their significant community contributions. These included:

- **Citizen of the Year:** Mrs Frances Evans
- **Business House of the Year:** Ellerslie Lane
- **Young Sportsperson of the Year:** Mr Fletcher Hunt
- **Sportsperson of the Year:** Warren Rugby Club First Grade
- **Young Achiever of the Year:** Mr Jerome Shepherd
- **Community Event of the Year:** St Mary's Parish School Presentation of the Lion King Jr, the Musical
- **Community Service Award:** Mr Stephen Muir
- **Young Citizen of the Year:** Miss Zoey Daley

Read more about our 2024 Warren Shire Australia Day Award Winners:

### **WINNER: Citizen of the Year: Frances Evans**

As the driving force behind the Warren Chamber Music Festival, Frances Evans has put Warren Shire on the map for music fans across Australia. In addition to organising the bi-annual Music Festival, Frances is responsible for the exposure of world class musicians to the Warren Shire community, creating and running the local community choir, successfully applying for community grants, and facilitating the development of musicians both young and old throughout Warren Shire.

### **WINNER: Business House of the Year: Ellerslie Lane**

Ellerslie Lane was officially opened by the Storer family in November 2021. The homewares and gift store also serves coffee and light meals. However, Ellerslie Lane is much more to the people of Warren Shire than a homewares and gift shop that sells delicious treats. It has become a meeting point for friends, a place to share ideas, a venue to host meetings and events, and a focal point for the community.

### **WINNER: Young Sportsperson of the Year: Fletcher Hunt**

Fletcher has been an outstanding ambassador for Warren Shire, excelling at the highest level in Rugby League. Fletcher's skill, dedication and ability in this area have seen him selected for a range of Western, Regional and NSW Central High School teams, as well as his selection to train with the Newcastle Knights to begin his journey on the NRL pathway.



**WINNER: Sportsperson of the Year: Warren Rugby Club Warren Rugby Club First Grade Side**

The Warren Rugby Club turns 70 this year, with its First Grade side winning their first Western Plains Rugby Union premiership in five years in 2023. This was also the first win on home soil since 1988, in front of a crowd of nearly 1100 people, plus an additional 900 viewers via live stream.

**WINNER: Young Achiever of the Year: Jerome Shepherd**

Jerome is an exceptional multi-instrumentalist. His outstanding dedication and talent enables him to proficiently play the guitar, piano and drums, and his talent has been widely recognised by institutions across the country including the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and the Tamworth Country Music Academy. He is a member of Warren Shire's first Indigenous youth rock band, the Dreaming Drifters.

**WINNER: Community Event of the Year: St Mary's Parish School Presentation of the Lion King Jr, the Musical**

St Mary's Parish School's presentation of The Lion King Jr, the Musical, was a celebration of not just their school community but the wider community of Warren. The students, parents and staff prepared every element of costuming, decorations, set building and construction, choreography, and ticket design, with over 800 community members attending the performance over two days.

**WINNER: Community Service Award: Stephen Muir**

Over 39 years of service to the Warren Shire community as a member of the Warren Fire Brigade, Stephen worked his way up the ranks to become Captain and would have attended an estimated 2,000 callouts during this time. Stephen is a quiet achiever, who in addition to his service to his community is a great father, grandfather, and role model for future generations.

**WINNER: Young Citizen Award: Zoey Daley**

Zoey's exceptional citizenship is demonstrated by the way she has participated in many events as a young leader. She has learnt and delivered the Acknowledgement of Country in Wayilwan language at various events, as well as regularly acting as an MC, presenter, and narrator. She is a talented multi-instrumentalist, a member of the Dreaming Drifters, was President of Warren Central School's Student Representative Council (SRC) during 2023 and was elected co-school Captain 2023/2024.

Warren Shire Council congratulates all 2024 Australia Day Award winners and nominees.

**-ENDS-**

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