

8.1. Mayoral Minute - 24/01/2022 - Australia Day 2022

Report by Mayor – Councillor Maree Statham

Commentary

As Australia Day approaches I would like to speak of what this day will mean for me. Also, I will take this opportunity to inform the Council and the community of the range of Australia Day activities to be held in Lithgow, Portland and Wallerawang this Wednesday.

I like the fact that Australia Day does cause us to pause and reflect on what it means to be Australian. When I do this, I conclude that we have much to celebrate in our community, despite some of the challenges we have confronted in the past two years. These challenges have really highlighted to me the resilience of this community. I feel that is because we have a strong sense of community and so, as a result, we look out for each other.

I think we can also rightly recognise and celebrate that the Lithgow region is a most welcoming and inclusive place.

It is often said that Australians are egalitarian, but in Lithgow you see that in practice. Australia Day is a timely opportunity to again acknowledge the committed work of those who have been the first responders during the Coronavirus pandemic because they have put our safety and wellbeing before their own.

The Australia Day Ambassador for 2022 is James Chapman OLY. Known for his achievements in national, international and Olympic rowing, James Chapman is proud to be an Australia Day Ambassador and to join in our community celebrations. James will give an address at the Lithgow and Portland ceremonies.

Lithgow's Official Ceremony will be held at Queen Elizabeth Park from 10:00 to 11:00am with a Citizenship Ceremony, the NSW Local Citizenship Awards, and the Ambassador's Address. If it is raining, the event will instead be held at the same time at the Union Theatre. There will also be free entry to the Lithgow Aquatic centre all day.

Wallerawang celebrations will take place at the Wallerawang Community & Sports Club from 10.30am.

The **Portland** community will be able to celebrate Australia Day with family and friends in Wolgan Street Portland from 10:00am. The official ceremony commences at 12 midday and I look forward to participating in these events, again, with our Australia Day Ambassador.

Unfortunately, there is the need for reduced entertainment and food stalls at all locations in line with current Covid restrictions, and Covid safe measures will be in place for all sites. But I am sure that this will not diminish our local community from embracing the spirit of Australia Day.

Attachments

Nil

Recommendation

THAT Council note the range of Australia Day activities to be held in Lithgow, Portland and Wallerawang