

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 10:00 AEST, 26 JANUARY 2022**

## Cook Shire locals honoured this Australia Day

**26 January 2022**

**COOKTOWN**

It was a pared back, invitation only, Australia Day event at Cooktown PCYC this morning to celebrate the nominees and winners of the Australia Day Awards, and welcome six new Australian citizens to the Shire.

“From music and the arts, to sport and the passionate commitment of the many tireless volunteers in our community, our Citizen of the Year Award recipients and nominees are to be applauded for their hard work and dedication,” said Cook Shire Mayor Peter Scott.

“Their passion demonstrates the Australian spirit in action. The amazing work they all do showcases the richness and diversity of our community which all contributes towards making Cook Shire such an amazing place to call home.”

Lou Norgard received the Citizen of the Year Award for her significant contribution to Cooktown and surrounding communities as a health and wellbeing advocate and volunteer, while internationally acclaimed Indigenous Artist, Naomi Hobson received the Arts and Culture Award.

Mayor Scott also encouraged community members to think about others in the community who would be worthy nominees for next year’s awards, and submit their details when nominations open later this year.

### **Award winner citations:**

#### **Citizen of the Year Award – Lou Norgard**

Since retiring in 2009, Lou Norgard has generously offered her skills and knowledge of the health and social care sector as a volunteer, committee member and dedicated community advocate. In her capacity as Chair of the Community Advisory Committee for Cooktown and District Multipurpose Hospital and Health Care, she successfully advocated for a kidney dialysis machine in Cooktown and is actively involved in the steering group for the proposed new hospital. Lou has also been the Southern Cape York representative on the Community

Advisory Committee for Cape York and Torres Strait Health Services for the last 5 years, regularly volunteers at the Cooktown Magistrate Court and the History Centre and was one of the founders of the Cooktown 60s and Better community ground that has promoted inclusion, support and wellbeing to older adults for more than 10 years.

### **Young Citizen of the Year – Ella Hartwig**

Cooktown singer and songwriter Ella Hartwig is renowned for the original, acoustic indie folk songs that have seen her win several song-writing awards, including the 2018 Palm Creek Folk Festival and the University of Southern Queensland's 'Get Song-writing' awards. Ella has also been nominated for Queensland Music Awards in both 2020 and 2021. Her 2019 EP and her latest single *Leaving* are currently available on most streaming platforms, including TripleJ's Unearthed, where her soulful lyrics, and indie/folk melodies are gaining international recognition.

### **Art and Culture Award – Naomi Hobson**

Naomi Hobson is a Southern Kaantju/Umpila multi-disciplinary artist who lives in Coen. Since her first exhibition 8 years ago, Naomi has been a three-time finalist in the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards (2014, 2015, and 2016) and was the winner of the 2016 Alice Prize. Naomi practices in painting, photography, and ceramics. Her colourful abstract compositions act as a link between individuality and a shared identity, her photography grapples with Indigenous identity and social issues confronting Indigenous peoples, while her ceramics are a modern expression of her ancient culture. Her continual inspiration is the vast traditional lands of her ancestors surrounding the town of Coen and her culture. Her works are already hanging in the National Gallery of Victoria, and in 2021 her distinctive art has featured on one of the country's biggest makeup retailers, MECCA. As part of MECCA's support for women in the arts, and through their partnership with the National Gallery of Victoria, they have collaborated with Naomi to bring the holiday spirit to life – decorating their stores, adorning packaging and marketing with her artwork.

### **Volunteer of the Year – Bob Norris**

Bob Norris joined the Endeavour Lions Club in 1999 during which he's sat as club secretary for 7 years. Bob's dedication to fundraising events, activities, combined with his innovative commitment to the Containers for Change Scheme has greatly increased the club's profits, bringing in more than \$130,000 for the Lion's Club. Bob is also currently Vice President of the Cooktown RSL Memorial Club (3 years), current Welfare Officer for RSL Sub-Branch (2 years). Since 2002 Bob has also been the President of the Cooktown Historical Society, and in 2022 looks forward to sitting as their Treasurer.

## **Sports Award (Individual, Group or Event) – Cooktown Underwater Hockey Club**

In 2021 the Cooktown Underwater Hockey took 8 junior players to Tasmania, to represent Queensland at the Underwater Hockey National Competition in a number of age categories. A testament to their tireless training and dedication to their sport, the team took home a gold and 2 silvers medals, making their community and their team proud, and proving themselves to be inspirational role models, promoting sports and active lifestyle in the community.

For more information contact Cook Shire Council via email at [mail@cook.qld.gov.au](mailto:mail@cook.qld.gov.au) or phone on 4082 0500.

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