



Anna Burke MP

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Celebrating Local Volunteers

The Caroline Chisholm Awards, which recognise outstanding volunteers in the cities of Whitehorse and Monash, have celebrated their 10th anniversary at the ceremony for this year's Awards.

The Awards are named after nineteenth century volunteer Caroline Chisholm, who assisted over 14,000 people between the years 1841 and 1844. She embodied all that is noble about volunteering.

"For ten years now, the Caroline Chisholm Awards have celebrated the contribution of outstanding people performing voluntary work in our community. The Awards are about recognising unsung local heroes whose work would otherwise go unheralded," Ms Burke said.

"Over the past decade, hundreds of deserving volunteers who either live or perform voluntary work in the electorate of Chisholm have received Awards for the selfless contributions they make in helping others and ultimately the community," Ms Burke said.

The recipients of this year's Caroline Chisholm Awards continue the tradition of the Award winners in embodying both selflessness and community-mindedness in a variety of ways.

Brenda Gabe received her Caroline Chisholm Award posthumously for her ongoing and committed advocacy for women, people with disabilities and better health and community outcomes.

Ms Gabe's commitment to these areas led her to participate as either a board member or Director of at least 11 organisations, including the Monash Council Disability Consultative Committee, MonashLink Community Health Service, Mulgrave Neighbourhood House, the Victorian Disability Advocacy Network and the Coalition for People's Transport.

Ms Gabe made these contributions despite suffering from multiple sclerosis and debilitating asthma.

George Haitidis received his Caroline Chisholm Award for his contribution to the Waverley Unit of the Victorian State Emergency Service (VICSES) since 2005. VICSES is a volunteer-based organisation which responds to emergencies and works to ensure the safety of communities around Victoria.

Mr Haitidis contributes an average of around ten to fifteen hours of voluntary work per week to the efficient management of the unit, including ensuring all administrative functions are completed, and attending meetings with VICSES and the City of Monash.

Aged 82, Ron Sanday received his Caroline Chisholm Award for the generous and selfless assistance he has provided to his local community, in particular his neighbours. Mr Sanday has helped look after his neighbours, doing their shopping, mowing their lawns, even cooking meals for those unable to care for themselves.

The Caroline Chisholm Award Committee has never received anything like the correspondence they received about Mr Sanday and were pleased to honour him with a Caroline Chisholm Award.

Media Contact: Simon Miller (0417 140 935)

“Volunteers play such an important role in strengthening our community, often at great personal sacrifice. It’s important to recognise the vital difference they make in many people’s lives,” Ms Burke said.

“I am very grateful to the Caroline Chisholm Awards Committee comprising of Norm Gibbs, Councillor Joy Banerji of Monash Council and Keyur Kelkar for their oversight of this year’s Awards”, Ms Burke said.

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