

-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-

18 DECEMBER 2022:

#### AUSTRALIA DAY AMBASSADORS ANNOUNCED

Australia Day 2023 will see two Ambassadors visit the LGA, who will no doubt bring their stories of life and achievements to life at the annual Australia Day celebrations held in Cootamundra and Gundagai.

Ms Katryna Robinson will present awards at Gundagai. Katryna Robinson is an incredibly proud Australian who believes every Australian should have regular access to a toothbrush and a bar of soap. She is the Founder and CEO of the charity Every Little Bit Helps a national charity which helps homeless people in Australia.

Katryna runs the charity on a pro-bono basis and leads a team of inspirational volunteers who, through their efforts and the donations of others, have distributed almost 70,000 care packs or 1.35 million items, in just over 7 years to people in need who are homeless.

Professionally Katryna is an IT Recruiter with 20+ years' experience and runs her own business – Talent Finders.

Katryna was born and educated in the NSW Southern Highlands and has been living Sydney's Northern Beaches for the last 16 years with her husband and daughter.

Mr Bruce Whately will be the Ambassador for Cootamundra. Mr Whately spent the earlier part of his working life in advertising as an art director and illustrator but since 1992 has written and/or illustrated over 100 children's picture books published both in Australia and overseas. Award winning titles include *The Ugliest Dog in the World*, *Looking for Crabs*, *Detective Donut and the Wild Goose Chase*, *Diary of a Wombat* and *Baby Wombat's Week* which took out the Australian Book Industry Award in 2010. More recently *The Little Refugee*, *Flood, Fire and Cyclone* and *And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda* which was shortlisted by the CBCA for 2016. *Pandemic* was chosen as international book of the year in 2021.

He uses a variety of illustration medium including gouache, pen and ink, pencil, oils, watercolour and more recently CGI software.

Mr Whately completed a PhD, in 2008 *Left Hand Right Hand: implications of ambidextrous image making* looking at the image making of the non-dominant. This resulted in a 30,000-word dissertation and an exhibition of paintings and sculpture.

*Ruben* published in 2017, a 92-page picture book/graphic novel was shortlisted for the Prime Minister's Literary Award in 2018 and selected for the Bologna Children's Book Exhibition before publication in 2016.

In 2021 he started painting again and was a finalist in that years Percival Portrait Prize. This year he has been a finalist in the Gosford Art Prize, the Basil Sellers art Prize, the National Capital Art Prize and currently semi-finalist of the Doug Moran Portrait Prize.

Painting mainly in oils and has started to sculpt in clay. Mr Whately hopes this is the beginning of a new journey as an Australian Contemporary Figure Painter and sculptor.

Cootamundra-Gundagai mayor Cr Charlie Sheahan said he was looking forward to meeting the Ambassadors.

“The Australia Day Ambassadors have always brought a new perspective and entertained audiences with their stories, it’s a privilege to welcome these people to our region, and be a part of Australia Day, I do hope people will come along to Australia Day in our Parks and enjoy the morning,” Cr Sheahan said.

Cootamundra residents please note the change of venue for 2023. Albert Park, near the Rose Garden will be the venue due to construction works in Jubilee Park.

Photos and caption:

Mr Bruce Whatley will be the Australia Day Ambassador at the Cootamundra celebrations to be held in Albert Park on 26 January 2023. An artist, his story will be of great interest to local artists.

Founder and CEO of the charity Every Little Bit Helps, Ms Katryna Robinson will be the Ambassador for Australia Day in Gundagai. Born and educated on in the NSW Southern Highlands Ms Robinson will present awards in Carberry Park Gundagai, on 26 January 2023.



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**Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council**  
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