



BILL CALABRIA TAKES OUT CITIZEN OF THE YEAR!

Australia Day was celebrated with traditional Australian pride yesterday with many communities gathered around the country to honour and recognise those who have over achieved. The Riverina community was no exception, where a large crowd joined at the Pioneer Park Museum for the Annual Australia Day Awards and announced Bill Calabria as the Citizen of the year.

A total of 14 community stalwarts were in the running for the prestigious honour. Council's Australia Day committee chairwoman, councillor Christine Stead, said she was delighted at the quality and quantity of nominations for top citizen.

Sixty-five years ago, Italian migrants Francesco & Elizabeth Calabria established a humble five acre winery in the west end of town. Yesterday, their son Bill paid a moving tribute to his parents as he accepted the Citizen of the Year award at Pioneer Park.

"My Mother always said to me 'we haven't got much, but we're always prepared to help others'," Mr. Calabria said. "It makes me feel good to do something for someone else". The beloved winemaker and owner of Westend Estate Wines was awarded the top Australia Day honour for his tireless community work, including more than \$500,000 over seven years through Country Hope events and establishing the Westend Estate Foundation to support disadvantaged local families.

Griffith Mayor, Mike Neville told the crowd Mr. Calabria was "Not only a great volunteer, but a champion as a bloke as well as a businessman". "Bill has dedicated his life to Griffith, and his community work exemplifies the spirit of Griffith," Councillor Neville said. He is living proof that it only takes one good man to make things happen."

During the ceremony modest Mr. Calabria preferred to draw attention to his fellow nominees. "I find this very humbling and don't think I really deserve it, because everyone here is a winner" he said. "It's amazing how many people are dedicated to providing for the local community – all we can do is our best."

This is another top award that the Calabria family have added to their collection, with the family bringing home 'NSW Family Business of the year' and Exporter of the Year at the NSW Business Awards late November.

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Citizen of the Year - Bill Calabria