



Media Release

for immediate release



News item from MacDonnell Regional Council released on 30 October 2017 page 1

For further information please contact MacDonnell Regional Council, Communications Officer Darren Pfitzner by phone 0428 040 485 or email media@macdonnell.nt.gov.au



Finke named Territory Tidy Town



Originally an important siding on the Old Ghan railway line, the proud community of Finke has a rich cultural history. This evening another qualification for this remote community was made when it was named Territory Tidy Town at the annual Keep Australia Beautiful (NT) awards ceremony.



Since the community's formative times alongside the Old Ghan track, the residents of Finke have a long standing relationship with visiting tourists. Today it welcomes travellers on the Oodnadatta track, four wheel drive enthusiasts traversing the Simpson Desert and once a year it is the challenging half way point of the Finke Desert Race.



Throughout all these encounters it is a close knit community that has developed great civic pride. Residents of Finke are driven to promote various clean and sustainable initiatives that keep their community tidy and welcoming. They have embraced MacDonnell Regional Council's development of their waste management processing and engage where possible with their own initiative like curbside recycling – not bad for a town with roads that don't have curbs!



Traditionally known as *Aputula*, Finke has a population of about 160 residents and is located 230km south west of Alice Springs. The community today takes its name from the usually dry Finke River (one of the oldest river systems in the world dating back 350 million years) that meanders by the area.



“Finke has been awarded in different categories over the years – its great it is now named the Territory Tidy Town” said Council President, Roxanne Kenny.



The entire community has embraced the responsibility to keep their community clean. While the local Civil Works team of the MacDonnell Regional Council provides the backbone for getting things done, they are well supported by the efforts of the residents.



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Tidy Town awards recognise efforts of council staff and residents from communities across the Northern Territory and were presented by the Deputy Administrator the Honourable Ann Miller AO and other civic leaders in a gala ceremony at the Convention Centre in Alice Springs. Workers representing MacDonnell Regional Council communities came into Alice Springs to attend this year's Territory Tidy Town awards ceremony.



When MacDonnell Council formed in 2008 many communities didn't have a regular rubbish collection and households burned their waste in old fuel drums in the street. Today communities compete to best impress the judges and MacDonnell Regional Council has gone from strength to strength in its achievements and in the Territory Tidy Town awards. At this year's awards ceremony they once again emerged as the major winner of the evening:



- Having won *Best Medium Community* Finke then won the major *Territory Tidy Town* award qualifying it to represent the Northern Territory at the National Tidy Town Awards in Barmera South Australia next year.
- Finke also won the *Waste Management* award, the *Resource Recovery* award and the *Litter Management (Southern Region)* award
- Santa Teresa won the *Community Participation (Southern Region)* award
- while the Ltyentye Apurte Catholic Education Centre in Santa Teresa won the *Best Territory Tidy Towns School* award
- Central Australian Waste Management Working Group's Coordinator Michael Davis was recognised for his continuing efforts across the Barkly, Central Desert and MacDonnell Regional Councils through the *Waste Management Champion* award
- and the MacDonnell Regional Council won the *Best Regional Council* award for the fourth consecutive year



A healthy competition among the 13 communities of the MacDonnell Regional Council means the achievements of its staff are rated very highly when judged against the rest of the Northern Territory and Council communities are consistently highly commended in the National Tidy Towns competition. In many aspects of local government and service delivery in remote Australia, the MacDonnell Regional Council is seen as a leader and innovator by stakeholders and peers.



Against the challengers, MacDonnell Regional Council's record is strong – consistently winning the Best Regional Council Award since it was introduced in 2014. This reflects its high standards and the achievements of its remote communities over those years and includes the top honour of



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consecutively being a Territory Tidy Town winner: Areyonga in 2016, Mt Liebig in 2015, and Titjikala in 2014 and 2013.



“I knew our communities were doing great work – but to be told, four years running, that we are the Best Regional Council suggests we are doing something right!” said MacDonnell Regional Council CEO, Jeff MacLeod.



The Territory Tidy Towns awards not only recognise the efforts of litter management, but also include the categories of resource recovery, waste management, water conservation, energy conservation, eco-education, and community participation in small, medium and large communities and towns.



End.



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or Keep Australia Beautiful Council NT, CEO and Territory Tidy Town judge Hiemo Schober by phone 0407 186 461 or email to ceo@kabnt.org.au



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