



Media Release

for immediate release



News item from MacDonnell Regional Council released on 18 April 2018 page 1 of 2

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 wins two national Tidy Town categories



The small remote community of Finke was recognised when named the winner in two categories at the Keep Australia Beautiful national Tidy Town awards ceremony last night. Having flown from the edge of the Simpson Desert in the Northern Territory to Barmera on the Murray River in South Australia, three of Finke's 160 proud residents accepted the awards on behalf of their community.



Flying the flag for the Northern Territory in the national competition, Finke was first named joint winner of the Community Action and Wellbeing category and then outright winner of the Heritage and Culture category. Having also been highly commended in the Dame Phyllis Frost Litter Prevention, Waste Management and Resource Recovery category, Finke found itself under consideration with two other towns for the main prize.



Representing Finke at the awards, residents Rosemary Matasia, Leigh Iselin-Blumberg and Kenneth Hayes had a tense wait until the conclusion of proceedings when Smithton in north-west Tasmania was announced as the national Tidy Town winner for 2018.



“ Successful collaboration is evident as Finke continues to grow – providing longevity to its current and future generations. Using their environment to their advantage, where possible, is enabling Finke to remain true to its culture and heritage while modernising their world “, national Tidy Town judge Gail Langley said.



The entire community embraces 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. In all their encounters Finke is a close knit community that has developed great civic pride.



many voices, one dream, building a quality desert lifestyle



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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 – even though their roads don't have curbs!



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.



Traditionally known as *Aputula*, Finke has a population of about 160 residents and is located 230km south east 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.



The national and territory Tidy Town awards recognise the community's long commitment to the values of Tidy Towns as a continuing part of their culture. Finke has previously been named *Territory Tidy Town* in 1998 and again in 2017.



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 nation or the territory. 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.



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 across the nation to impress Tidy Town judges. MacDonnell Regional Council communities have gone from strength to strength in their Tidy Town achievements.



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Also see following release from Keep Australia Beautiful (NT)



many voices, one dream, building a quality desert lifestyle

Aputula (Finke) takes home several 2018 Australia Tidy Town Awards

The Central Australian MacDonnell Regional Council desert community township of Aputula (Finke) has done Northern Territory proud and is Australia's 2018 Heritage and Culture Winner as well as joint winner of the Community Action and Wellbeing category plus the well-deserved 'Highly Commended' recipients of the 2018 Australian Tidy Towns Litter Prevention, Waste Management and Resource Recovery Categories.

As the Territory's 2017 Tidiest Town, Aputula (Finke) represented the Northern Territory at the Keep Australia Beautiful, 2018 Australian Tidy Towns Awards in South Australia, at a national gala dinner on Friday evening.

Aputula (Finke) are the 2018 Australian Heritage & Culture category winners. Aputula (Finke) is also joint Winner of the Australian Community Action & Wellbeing category, plus Highly Commended for Litter Prevention, Waste Management and Resource Recovery actions.

Keep Australia Beautiful Council (NT) CEO, Heimo Schober, said that Aputula (Finke) residents have embraced the Territory Tidy Towns program for some years now, with many in the community working hard to create a proud community culture, they proudly represented Northern Territory at the National Australian Awards and then winning these prestigious Australian Awards will certainly put the community on a deserved high for some time.

"The township's strong culture of continuous improvement and community participation helped the MacDonnell community of Aputula (Finke) lead the national competition to win and own these categories" said Mr Schober.

"MacDonnell Council Staff, Community Elders and residents of Aputula demonstrated great community pride and leadership in community culture and heritage, local sustainability practices and education, and set a wonderful example for other remote Australian townships to follow.

"Aputula (Finke) was the stand-out township last year in promoting local culture and heritage, community participation and keeping their community tidy and beautiful, and I believe they certainly earned their win at the nationals as Australia's Best in these categories.

"2018 is one of the best and greatest national achievements recently obtained by a Northern Territory Community at our Australian Awards.

"I encourage all Territorians to get behind this small proud central Australian township of Aputula (Finke) and proudly acknowledge the community on their wins, they have made big changes in sustainably reducing litter pollution and beautifying their community, they have a fantastic quality of life in Aputula."

At last year's Northern Territory Awards ceremony, Aputula (Finke) officially became the 'Territory's Tidiest Town' and Northern Territory's Finalist after winning the overall NT Award as well as receiving the Category Award for 'Best Medium Territory Tidy Towns Community'.

The Territory Tidy Towns Awards program recognises and acknowledges the hard work undertaken by remote and regional community groups, schools, individuals, businesses and Councils, and showcases innovative ideas and initiatives that create culture necessary to improve social and environmental development wellbeing and sustainability in regional areas of NT.

The national Tidy Town Awards was held at Barmera in South Australia on 6th April 2018.

For further information, please contact

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About Keep Australia Beautiful Council (NT): Keep Australia Beautiful Council NT is the Northern Territory's peak body on litter prevention. With more than four decades of experience in engaging Territorians to care for their local environments, KABC(NT) Programs include Territory Tidy Towns, National Litter Index, Eco-Schools, Sustainable Cities, Clean Beaches, and Keep Australia Beautiful Week in August.

The KABC(NT) website is www.kabcnt.org.au where all information on the organisation can be accessed including membership, Eco-School program and the National Litter Index, which is Australia's only independent nation-wide litter research.

The Keep Australia Beautiful Council (NT) Facebook page address is www.facebook.com/keepaustraliabeautifulnt