

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS



Saving lives and easing suffering, both here and abroad

CHAD VAN ESTROP

DAVID Watters is an example of the supreme standard of medical knowledge and talent available at Geelong hospital.

For 16 years he's been the director of endocrine and colorectal surgery at Barwon Health while also performing emergency procedures.

Most commonly, his specialist unit completes thyroid surgeries, which can bring

significant changes to a blood pressure and weight.

Professor Watters, who teaches at Deakin University, has more than three decades of surgical experience, completing about 500 procedures each year in that time.

Much of his work has focused on setting surgery standards in the Third World.

He's overseen surgery departments in Zambia and South Africa, written more than 150 papers in peer re-

viewed medical journals and produced seven books, two of which are considered 'bibles' by Third World surgeons.

A graduate of The University of Edinburgh, Prof Watters settled in Newtown after eight years overseeing surgery in Papua New Guinea, where he and others halved the death rate from head injuries.

"I always wanted to help the people that were underprivileged, so I went to medical school, so I could go and work

in the developing world," Prof Watters told the *Geelong Advertiser* this week after visiting the World Health Organisation in Switzerland to advocate for higher surgery standards.

"Seventeen million deaths, which is about a third of world deaths each year, are due to surgical conditions. Surgery has tended to be left out in public investment in low and middle income countries." For significant service to

medical education and through leadership roles with medical organisations such as Barwon Health, Prof Watters will today become a Member of the Order of Australia.

"It's a tremendous honour for a country. I've been in for just under 20 years."

Prof Watters says the honour is also recognition for his time at the helm of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and the response to abuse in the workforce.



Professor David Watters



SO MUCH KINDNESS: Lyn Mulligan.

Picture: Glenn Ferguson

Lyn's always willing to lend a hand

CHAD VAN ESTROP

WARMNESS emanates from Lyn Mulligan. Spend minutes with her and you feel like you've known her for years.

For half a century she's enriched the lives of those on the Bellarine Peninsula and abroad.

From desperate refugees arriving at her Ocean Grove doorstep seeking respite to those she's cared for as a hospice worker, Ms Mulligan has shown endless compassion.

"Service to others is the rent you pay for your room on Earth," Ms Mulligan said, channelling Muhammad Ali. Ms Mulligan's garage is a storage space for bikes, mattresses, clothes and other household items ready to be sent to families in need. The effect she has on the

less fortunate is best told by the story of Afghan refugee Farhin, who came to Australia by boat and eventually settled in Ocean Grove.

For the past two years, the devout Muslim has been taking Ms Mulligan to church as dues for the hospitality, love and care she's shown his family.

And it's not the only family the sprightly 86-year-old has cared for — a table at her home is decorated with about five others' "dear" to her but there's likely hundreds more.

The mother of four and former Royal Melbourne Hospital surgery nurse said the Ocean Grove Barwon Heads Hospice she started with others in the '70s is her proudest achievement.

"This was the best thing I've done in my life. The people were vulnerable and

they needed support."

For sustained service to community organisations including Oxfam Ocean Grove, the United Church Ocean Grove, Rural

Australians for Refugees, Bikes for Humanity, Bellarine Community Health and Girl Guides, Ms Mulligan will today be honoured with a Medal of the Order of Australia.

Nominated twice before she's finally accepted the award, some say it has been years overdue.

The award is a celebration of all things Australia, she said. "Australia is still the land of opportunity. There are so many people who are doing little things like me that are making a difference.

"I love the diversity of people who make up the brilliant tapestry of our country."

Passion for art rewarded

WHEN Graeme Wilkie moved to Lorne 40 years ago, sport dominated the community's culture.

The art lover was saddened that his new home did not have art exhibitions or concerts, so he decided to change things — bringing galleries and the art beloved to Lorne.

For his service to the visual arts, Mr Wilkie will today be honoured with a Medal of the Order of Australia.

"I am quite humbled by this whole thing," Mr Wilkie said. "I really sometimes think

what I've done in my life for the arts is really driven by passion."

More than two decades ago Mr Wilkie opened QDOS Arts Centre, was a founding member of Geelong Potters Group and Surf Coast Arts and established the hugely successful Lorne Sculpture Biennale in 2007.

"When I moved to Lorne there was very little in cultural activities — it was very sports based.

Mr Wilkie thanked the community for its support.

Barwick a runway success Spence makes difference

THE people of Australia can thank Neville Barwick for overseeing construction of the Melbourne airport in the '60s, and for raising the funds to build the East Timorese embassy in Canberra.

As means to repay the people of East Timor for their contribution to WWII and holding off the Japanese, Mr Barwick embarked on raising the \$3.2 million needed to build the embassy.

Mr Barwick sourced corporate and philanthropic donations to fund the project,

which was built at cost by construction company Grocon. He's also worked with Hanover group in Melbourne for seven years.

In recent years, Mr Barwick has worked with the Point Lonsdale Probus Club and the Queenscliffe Maritime Museum.

For service to the community, and to Australia-East Timor relations, Point Lonsdale's Mr Barwick will be commended today with a Medal of the Order of Australia.

PRESTIGE Jayco Geelong chairman John Spence has grown his business for 30 years in part to support the local community.

"As a couple, my wife and I were always interested in people and their stories," Mr Spence said. "If we see that we can make a real difference, and we can afford to do it, we will take on a project — one person at a time."

Mr Spence and his wife Joan support community organisations in Ocean Grove, Leopold, Lara, Queenscliff, St

Leonards and Portarlington.

In the past 20 years he's also helped the Father Bob Maguire Foundation, worked at Lifetime and supported Geelong Rotary, Give Where You Live, and Denis Walter's Carols by the Bay.

For service to the Geelong community Mr Spence will be honoured today with a Medal of the Order of Australia.

"The OAM award gives me an occasion to think about what I've really accomplished and it is very energising," he said.