

MEDIA RELEASE



St John Ambulance awards Molong young heroes

30 March 2009. Joshua Forester from Dubbo and Samuel Little, residents of Dubbo and Molong respectively, have several reasons to smile.

The two cadets from the Molong Division of St John (NSW) were awarded on March 4 with the Grand Prior's award, the only cadet achievement that can be carried by a cadet when they become adult volunteers.

The award, which can only be achieved by completing 12 several difficult tasks and training, takes at least 3 years to be completed, and was handed over by the Lord Prior of the Order of St John, Professor Anthony Mellows OBE TD.

Professor Mellows is the most senior non-Royal member within St John Ambulance internationally, and was visiting Sydney to celebrate the work of the Australian volunteers and also unveil a foundation plaque for the new Burwood headquarters of St John (NSW).

"I was stunned when I heard we would be receiving the award from the hands of the Lord Prior", said Joshua, who is 14.

Samuel Little, 15, couldn't believe when he was first told he was receiving his Grand Prior award personally by the Lord Prior.

"I asked our divisional Superintendent, Julie Dean, if it was a joke, and she said it wasn't. For the Lord Prior to hand this award personally is a once-in-a-life-time opportunity", Samuel said.

Ms Julie Dean, Molong Cadet's Superintendent, drove Samuel and Joshua for three hours to get to Ashfield, Sydney, where the ceremony took place.

Around 120 St John volunteers from NSW marched and put together First Aid scenarios. They also had the chance to talk to the Lord Prior about their experiences as volunteers.

Professor Mellows said it was one of the most committed groups of volunteers he'd ever seen.

"These young volunteers have truly touched me with their dedication and community spirit."

"It is great to see that Australian volunteers are on the right path to a more community-minded world", said Professor Mellows.

St John Cadets are part of a national youth organisation, for those aged from 11 to 18, who develop extensive first aid, communication and leadership skills. Once trained, they are able to provide first aid at events under adult supervision. They also attend various excursions and camps during the year.

To know more about St John (NSW) or to become a volunteer, please visit www.stjohnnsw.com.au or call (02) 6366 8559.

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Notes to editor:

Photos are available upon request.

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