



Media Release

Tuesday 27 May 2008

Apollo Bay Doctors Win Award

Apollo Bay husband and wife doctor team Meg and Jim Lawless were honoured for their outstanding service to the Victorian rural community at the prestigious, Rural Workforce Agency Victoria (RWAV) *2008 Victorian Rural Doctors' Awards*, on Friday night in Melbourne.

Victorian rural doctors were nominated by their peers, patients and local community members in two categories, *35 Years of Service to Rural Communities* or *Outstanding Contribution to Rural Communities*.

Meg and Jim were recipients of the *35 Years of Service to Rural Communities* award.

Minister for Rural & Regional Development, the Hon. Jacinta Allan presented the doctors and their families with the awards at a gala dinner in the National Gallery of Victoria's Great Hall.

Rural Workforce Agency Victoria's (RWAV) Chairman and Mildura General Practitioner, Dr Philip Webster commends the doctors and their families for their commitment to rural Victorians.

"Our annual awards are significant as they're an opportunity to publicly acknowledge and honour our doctors for their dedication to rural Victorians," Dr Webster said.

"More importantly, the doctors provide terrific role models that will inspire and enthuse our medical students to seriously consider a career as a rural GP."

The Awards were attended by 200 guests that included Award recipients and their families, health professionals from all disciplines and medical school students.

Other doctors who received an award herald from Wodonga, Ballarat, Mansfield, Colac, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Orbost, Foster, Rupanyup, Bendigo, Kerang, Portland, Mildura, Hamilton and Omeo.

An awards panel comprising Australian College of Rural & Remote Medicine (ACCRM), RWAV, Rural Medical Family Network (RMFN), Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP), Committee of Chairmen of Victorian State Committees of Medical Colleges, Rural Doctors Association of Victoria (RDAV) and Australian Medical Association Vic (AMA) representatives assessed each of the nominees against the criteria for each of the categories.

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For high resolution images or to discuss further story ideas please call Samantha Marnell on 0439 551 720.

Background information

Drs Meg & Jim Lawless

Both Meg and Jim qualified at the University of St Andrews in Scotland in the late 50s, married in 1959 and headed overseas to the United States before settling in Zambia, Central Africa for ten years.

The intrepid travelers then returned to the UK before holidaying in Apollo Bay where they lent a helping hand to the town that had no doctor.

They had agreed to help the community out for two weeks, and that was 33 years ago!

Doctors Meg & Jim Lawless are commended for their dedication to humanity and rural practices for over 40 years.