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Nominate a hidden treasure in volunteering community

By Yvonne Gardiner | 1st Aug 2016 3:00 PM



HONOUR ROLL: Leisa Hoffmann uses her own experience of mental health and recovery to support others.

LEISA Hoffmann was listed on the 2014 Hidden Treasures Honour Roll after years of volunteering.

Opportunities in that voluntary role led to a full-time job as a peer worker with both Ability Links - a program with the Northern Rivers Social Development Council - and MI (Mental Illness) Fellowship.

Leisa, a Ballina resident, says she uses her lived experience of mental health and recovery to support others who are on a similar journey.

"The Hidden Treasures nomination was deeply important as it was a validation of the work I have put in and the recognition of the efforts of giving back to community that I continue to do," she said.

Leisa sees her main achievement as "a role model of recovery".

"People with a mental illness can be a valued member of our community," she said.

She grew up in the Lismore area where her father set an example through his volunteering efforts.

Leisa's first volunteering was with the Ballina Coast Guard and Paradise FM radio station.

Organisations that have benefited from her experience include the Lismore Adult Mental Health Unit, and the NNSW LHD Mental Health Forum.

Clarence MP Chris Gulaptis is encouraging Clarence and Richmond Valley communities to nominate rural women volunteers to be honoured on the 2016 NSW Hidden Treasures Honour Roll.

"This is not an award program, but a public tribute to the vast number of women who have given their valuable time and energy to assist others," he said.

To nominate a Hidden Treasures volunteer, you can complete a nomination online (<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/content/rwn/activities/hidden-treasures/hidden-treasures>).

For more information contact the Rural Women's Network on 02 6391 3612 or email rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Nominations close on Monday, August 1.

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