



MEDIA RELEASE

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Video rental pioneers win industry long-service awards

The Australian Video Rental Retailers Association has awarded eight veterans of the video/DVD rental industry in Victoria, South Australia, NSW, Queensland, Tasmania and Western Australia Long Service Awards in recognition of their contribution to the home entertainment industry.

The winners have collectively chalked up more than 200 years in the business of video/DVD rental. They run some of Australia's most iconic video stores and have shaped the industry since videos first hit the Australian market in the late 1970s.

Their industry pedigrees date back to the days when videos first came in wrap-around cardboard sleeves; when video machines were as big as suitcases and cost as much as \$2,000. They weathered the early format battle between BETA and VHS and have continued to build diversified businesses since the advent of DVD technology a decade ago.

"For decades, video/DVD stores have played a diverse and vital role in bringing entertainment to Australian homes around the country – and we wanted to celebrate that effort," says Ross Walden, AVRRA Executive Director.

The Long Service Award winners are:

National and South Australia

Tony Quici, owner of Network DVD in the Adelaide suburb of Marleston. He has been in the industry for 29 years, starting out at Adelaide Video Centre in 1979 when video rental had just begun. He has worked for home entertainment distributors 20th Century Fox, Vestron, RCA Columbia/Video Box Office and Entcorp. He joined the Network Video Group in 1998 and hasn't looked back.

Victoria

Joint winners: **Neville and Rosemary Winther**, owners of Bendigo icon Roundabout Video. They opened the store 25 years ago in 1983. From a humble start with only 450 VHS movies, Roundabout has grown into a mega store embracing DVD, BluRay, games and retail.

Tasmania

Joint winners: **Adrian Peters**, owner of LSR Network Movies in Burnie, Tasmania; and **Jill Poke**, one of the longest-serving video store employees in the country, having worked at LSR since 1979 when the store rented and sold whitegoods, TVs and video machines!

New South Wales

John Wallace, owner of Leading Edge Video, Thirroul. He first opened a video hire and sales store in Thirroul in February 1983. He is a founding member of the Leading Edge group and has been an AVRRA member since 1988. He is past retirement age but has no intention of leaving the industry!

Western Australia

Michael O'Connell, Civic Video State Manager (WA, SA and NT). Michael first managed a video store in Newman WA in 1982. He has been an employee, manager, owner operator, franchisor, franchisee, general manager and director of a video store group. He is a sought-after mentor and continues to assist newcomers to the industry.

Queensland

Sharon Saunders, owner of Video Ezy stores in the Brisbane suburbs of Windsor and Chermside. She started in industry 26 years ago with Twilight Video in 1982, and continues to contribute beyond her stores as a state marketing representative for the Video Ezy group.

Media: interview opportunities available with nominees via Debra Maynard of Hootville Communications on 0407 299 007.

About AVRRA

AVRRA is the industry body for Australia's video and DVD rental industry. It represents more than 50 per cent of all video libraries in Australia. Visit: www.avrra.com.au