



20th October 2016

Mount Barney caretakers awarded search and rescue accolade

A Queensland father and son were presented with the 2016 Australian Search and Rescue Award at an event hosted by the Western Australia Police in Fremantle tonight (Thursday, 20 October).

An initiative of the Australian National Search and Rescue Council (NATSAR), the accolade recognises an outstanding contribution to search and rescue activities in Australia.

The NATSAR Council is comprised of members from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, Australian Defence Force, State, Territory and Federal Police, who take turns hosting the annual award ceremony.

Mount Barney Lodge Country Retreat owner-operators, John Larkin and his son Innes, have lent their extensive knowledge of the national parks and hiking trails surrounding their lodge to numerous search and rescue missions in the area since 1989.

This local knowledge and experience has been sought after by search and rescue coordinators on more than 400 occasions for some 700 lost and overdue bushwalkers. In all cases the missing persons were found.

As well as participating in searches, John and Innes have offered the facilities of their lodge as a location for field search headquarters and helicopter landing and retrieval zones on countless occasions.

“John and Innes exemplify the real impact that members of the public with invaluable local knowledge can have during search and rescue operations, and are fitting recipients of the 2016 Australian Search and Rescue Award,” AMSA chief executive officer Mick Kinley said.

Notwithstanding their significant contribution to search and rescue operations over the last 27 years, Innes said he and his father were humbled by the NATSAR Council’s decision to award them with the 2016 accolade.

“Helping out with search and rescue operations is our way of giving back to the mountain that provides us with our livelihood,” Innes said.

Interviews with John and Innes, in person or remotely, can be arranged by contacting AMSA Media on 1300 624 633.

PHOTO CAPTION: Three generations of the Larkin family; John, his son Innes and grandson Connor, at the summit of Mount Acropolis.