Welcome back to the first Mayor’s Message for the year and as Mayor Walsh is away I will take the liberty of congratulating the organisers of both the Somerset and Wynyard Christmas parades for all their hard work. It is thanks to the many volunteers that work tirelessly behind the scenes that both of these events are highlights in the annual Waratah-Wynyard calendar.

With summer now upon us I ask all residents to take care when swimming in and around the municipal area. With great swimming spots at the Cam River, Wynyard and Boat Harbour, please remember to take care and if flags are in place to swim between these areas and ensure any children are adequately supervised. Now is also the time to ensure rural properties are adequately prepared for the bushfire season. The Tasmanian Fire Service has a lot of helpful information on the topic at its website www.fire.tas.gov.au and there is some information available at Council.

Plans are well underway for Australia Day with events in Wynyard and Somerset. The day will start in Richard Gutteridge Gardens, Wynyard, with an Aussie barbecue from 8am and formal Australia Day Awards presented at 9am. There will be music and entertainment for the children. This will be followed by the Australia Day Foreshore Fiesta at ANZAC Park, Somerset from 10am until 4pm. There will be entertainment, food, a chocolate wheel and more. Entry to the fiesta is free for children 11 and under. Age 12 and over is $7 with family tickets available for $20.