

THE Recorder

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Arise, Sir Lancelot ...

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COLLECTION: Lance Leak displays some of the 1500 Lions pins that he has collected from around the world in his travels with the service group.

It is hard to put a dollar figure next to helping your community, but the contribution of Lancelot Leak, better known as Lance, must be worth plenty as he has received one of Australia's highest honours.

He was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours List on Monday for service to the community of Port Pirie.

His life illustrates the thousands of lives he has touched.

Born in 1945 at Ashford Hospital in Adelaide, Mr Leak grew up Tintinara, a town in the Murray Mallee of South Australia.

He was only approaching his 16th birthday when he joined the South Australian Railways as a youth porter.

He progressed through the ranks where his career culminated in becoming Port Pirie stationmaster and area manager of Peterborough.

His career spanned 33 years and took to him many points of South Australia from Pinnaroo to Ceduna.

It is where he began his long involvement with country football and Mr Leak easily spoke about the best part of his involvement in the game he loves. "I have never come across anyone in what I have done who I dislike. It is what volunteering is about," he said. To put it simply, Lance played footy wherever his work took him.

His love for football continued after his playing days and Mr Leak says the premierships and off-field success at Port Football Club, where he is chairman, always bring a smile.

He was president of the Lions Club of Port Pirie in 1986-87 and in 1996-97 became District Governor of Lions in South Australia

It was a big mantle to hold – being responsible for 60 clubs, from suburban Adelaide to Leigh Creek and Coober Pedy and 2800 members. He still raises money for the Port Pirie club which is helping to fund a project to refurbish the Port Pirie room at Flinders Lodge in Adelaide.

The room provides a warm and welcoming environment to guests who need to travel to Adelaide for treatment.

Mr Leak helps Port Pirie to celebrate Australia Day. In 1987, he was involved in forming the Port Pirie Australia Day Committee.