

Outside Broadcast Award

Mayor's Pride Awards OB – Jonny Seabrook

The Mayor's Pride Awards is a regular annual event in St Albans. The Right Worshipful Mayor of St Albans continues a tradition of Mayoralty for over 450 years since the City's first Charter in 1553. These days the Mayor is chosen from the elected Councillors and serves for a year. During that year the Mayor nominates one or more charities to benefit from their fund-raising activities of which the Mayor's Pride Awards is one. This major annual fund-raising event celebrates the outstanding achievements of local organisations and individuals and the associated dinner raises funds for their chosen charities.

As the usual format of a grand dinner held in one of the City's most prestigious hotels could not be followed because of Covid-19 it was cancelled. Over the past ten years Radio Verulam has broadcast the event so we proposed its replacement by a "virtual" Awards event. The Mayor and St Albans Council organisers enthusiastically adopted the idea of a virtual event and worked closely with Radio Verulam volunteers to create it. The Mayor recorded her opening welcome and closing remarks to the event. Various local celebrities and Radio Verulam presenters recorded the detailed announcement of each nominee and their achievements and Radio Verulam presenter and Master of Ceremonies of the event Jonny Seabrook then read out the winners. Although pre-recorded the results were held back until the programme was broadcast and we also released the details of the winners of each category in real time on our Social Media outlets, Twitter, FaceBook and Instagram.

This had a very significant impact in our community as all of the nominees and their families were able to listen and comment on Social Media as the programme went out. The "virtual" Mayor's Pride Awards which replaced the usual event was therefore the place where the nominees and their families and friends heard the winners so was a "go to" event by itself!

The Mayor and Council were delighted with the result and issued a Press Release saying “

The winners of the St Albans Mayor's Pride Awards were unveiled on a special Radio Verulam broadcast after a planned ceremony was cancelled due to the Covid-19 crisis.

The nominees had been due to attend a glittering awards evening at St Michael's Manor hotel until the public health emergency prevented it from going ahead.

However, community station Radio Verulam came to the rescue by agreeing to host an alternative event – a live broadcast on the evening of Wednesday 1 April.

Jonny Seabrook hosted the programme with the results being read out on air while the nominees listened in at home.

The annual awards aim to celebrate the achievements of inspiring individuals, hard-working community groups and public-spirited businesses.

Councillor Janet Smith, the Mayor of the City and District of St Albans, said: “We were determined that the Covid-19 emergency would not stop us honouring our community heroes this year.

“My thanks to Radio Verulam for their excellent broadcast that ensured we still had a memorable awards evening.

“It is a shame that I couldn’t meet all the winners and nominees in person to offer my congratulations and present the awards.

“However, I still got to hear about the tremendous hard work and commitment they have shown over the past year.

In summary we successfully adapted the format of a significant annual event in the local calendar (with which we have been involved for many years) to a radio broadcast which we could produce under Lockdown conditions for our local Council. We were delighted to be able to emphasise our commitment to our community and to demonstrate the professionalism we can bring to enabling such prestigious events to happen even under extremely difficult conditions.