

Thought-provoking entries received for Sam Lewis Peace Prize

January 12, 2021

A distance education student with limited access to power and technology has won the grand prize in the 2020 Sam Lewis Peace Prize Awards.

Year 9 student Charion McManus, who is studying through distance education via Camden Haven High School, has been awarded \$500 for her artwork with the slogan "Peace surpasses all understanding for all creatures great and small".

"What appeals to me in this year's winning entry by Charion is the fineness of line in the work right up to the peace signing fingers, as well as the eternal significance of the symbol of the dove and the olive branch," said Jeannie Lewis. The Sam Lewis Peace Award was named in honour of her father, a former Federation president and activist for peace and public education.

"The dove is a symbol of peace in many cultures, ancient and modern. Doves are symbolic of new beginnings, peace, fidelity, love, luck and prosperity.

"Their release is a tradition that has been making ceremonies, rituals and celebrations more powerful and meaningful for thousands of years.

"The symbol of the dove transcends all cultures and traditions. The phrase to 'offer an olive branch' is significant as a symbol of peace and/or as an offer or gesture of conciliation or goodwill. So, the dove and the olive branch make a recognisable impact."

Charion was encouraged to enter the annual competition by her geography teacher, John Caimir. In December, Sam Lewis Peace Prize Committee member Darren Mearrick and John met with Charion (and her mum) in Port Macquarie to congratulate her.

More than 60 entries from schools across the state were received for this year's award.

There were several excellent thought-provoking entries, and it was wonderful to see so many younger people thinking about peace.

We will very soon provide information about the 2021 Sam Lewis Peace Prize competition and we hope again to see a substantial number of entries as we continue a competition that is almost 40 years old.

A big thanks to all members who promoted this year's competition and thanks to our dedicated committee - Darren Mearrick, Mariana Valeri, Brian Webb, Melina Ragusa and Paul Robson.

