



# Koori Mail

*The Voice of Indigenous Australia*

THE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS NEWSPAPER – 100% ABORIGINAL-OWNED 100% SELF-FUNDING

EDITION 842

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2025

PUBLISHED SINCE 1991

Phone: (02) 66 222 666

[www.koorimail.com](http://www.koorimail.com)

Recommended price \$2.99 (GST-inclusive)

## Glorious gowns go on display



Picture: Danielle Castano



TWO stunning couture gowns by Miriwoong artists, Peggy Griffiths and her granddaughter Cathy Ward, have been unveiled at the recent NGV Gala. Worn on the red carpet by emerging First Nations models, Charvarnie Walsh and Lisa Fatnowna, the gowns will become part of the gallery's permanent collection and go on display at NGV International in February 2025. Full story, Page 33.

# Jailhouse rocked by new bail laws



THE roll-out of new bail laws in the Northern Territory has caused havoc with more than one per cent of the population now behind bars. Journalists reported hearing

prisoners howling in the back of court cells in Darwin following a major crack-down by police, who made 31 arrests in just 24 hours after the law changes came into effect. The record high prisoner numbers have forced the

government to convert a purpose-built police watch house into a temporary jail. Domestic and family violence expert Chay Brown said what was happening underscored a lack of investment in programs that

could address behaviour change and keep women safe. "It's (the) government who have amended the bail laws and have publicly celebrated the increased prison numbers, only to now turn around and bemoan the fact the prisons are bursting

at the seams," Dr Brown said. In October the Country Liberal Party repealed bail legislation to ensure anyone committing 'serious crime' would face jail time.

● Full story, page 7.



**Getting ready for Indigenous All-Stars clashes - sport**



# INSIDE



## Widjabul Wia-bul celebrate

PAGE 5



## Find out what Nornie's cooking

PAGE 8



## Nooky heads respect campaign

PAGE 21



## Catching up with Tessa Rose

PAGE 31

# MY FAMILY

Patricia Joe (South Townsville, Qld),



The festive season and the first few weeks of the new year have been hectic for me, my younger sister Ellie and our five children.

We are very close all year around but over the last months we have been getting together big time.

During the first few weeks of 2025 we have been busy preparing the children for the school year after the holidays.

I am aged 49 and my sons are Thaddeus, aged 11, who will be a pupil at Town High and Eric, nine, who will be at Townsville South Primary School

Ellie's children are Sesmo, aged 13, Brendan, 12, and Michael, 11.

My two eldest nephews will be going to Town High and Michael also to Townsville South Primary School.

Last week we have been getting around to purchase books and stationery required by the five children for the new school year.

Ellie is aged 41, and we all live in South Townsville which is close to the two schools and the CBD.

During the school holidays and festive break the entire family has been busy enjoying time together.

Over Christmas we stayed at a relative's

house in North Ward suburb not far from the Strand and we went for walks and the kids loved the water park there. We also had a big feast.

One of the other highlights over the break was to attend the fireworks and lights display from the Strand Beach to celebrate the coming of 2025.

We could even see the lights across the water on Magnetic Island and it was great.

Another family enjoyment has been to travel by bus from South Townsville to the Annandale Shopping Centre on the other side of town.

That is where your *Koori Mail* photographer saw us as we did some Christmas shopping which we love doing as a family all together.

We also keep in touch with relatives in the Torres Strait.

And as sisters we support our children's education as we realise it will lead to a career when they finish school.

Being committed Christians we also have enjoyed the time over the Christmas break.

We are really looking forward to the rest of 2025 and our lives are enriched because of family.

Myself Patricia Joe (back row left) with sister Ellie and our children.

## SHARE YOUR FAMILY WITH OUR READERS

If you would like to see your family featured in the 'My Family' section of the *Koori Mail*, email a high-resolution digital photo to [editor@koorimail.com](mailto:editor@koorimail.com) along with a full caption (always reading from left to right) and between 350 and 400 words about your family. Tell us who is in your family, what you like to do as a family, your traditions and achievements, and what is important to you.

## Koori Mail

**Postal Address**  
PO Box 117, Lismore, NSW, 2480

**Street Address**  
11 Molesworth Street, Lismore, 2480  
Telephone (02) 66 222 666  
[www.koorimail.com](http://www.koorimail.com)

**STAFF**

**Cultural Lead:** Rhoda Roberts – [rhoda@koorimail.com](mailto:rhoda@koorimail.com)

**Editor:** Darren Coyne – [editor@koorimail.com](mailto:editor@koorimail.com)

**Newspaper Advertising:** [advertising@koorimail.com](mailto:advertising@koorimail.com)

**Job Web Advertising:** [webads@koorimail.com](mailto:webads@koorimail.com)

**Accounts:** [accounts@koorimail.com](mailto:accounts@koorimail.com)

**Subscriptions:** [subs@koorimail.com](mailto:subs@koorimail.com)

**Advertising Format**  
Page Size: 38cm deep x 26cm wide  
7 columns per page  
Single column size 35mm • 2.5mm space between columns

**Advertising Deadlines**  
Bookings 5pm on the Wednesday prior to publication.  
Material 5pm Thursday prior to publication.

**Koori Mail on The Web:** [www.koorimail.com](http://www.koorimail.com)

Complete details of editorial and jobs advertised in the *Koori Mail* can be accessed through the State Library of NSW's INFOKOORI service.

**INFOKOORI site address**  
<http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/infokoori>

The *Koori Mail* is published by Budsoar Pty Ltd and printed by SpotNews, 10 George Place, Artarmon NSW 2064.

The Aboriginal flag is reproduced in the *Koori Mail* by permission of its author, Harold Thomas.

The *Koori Mail* is owned equally by Nungera Co-operative (Maclean), Bundjalung Tribal Society (Lismore), Kurrachee Co-operative (Coraki), Buyinbin Co-operative (Casino) and Bunjum Co-operative (Cabbage Tree Island), all on the NSW north coast.

Items published in *Koori Mail* may be reproduced by Budsoar Pty Ltd on our website – [www.koorimail.com](http://www.koorimail.com)

# OUR CHILDREN



Niyiyaparli school students from the East Pilbara region learn about culture and management of Country through the Kids On Country Junior Rangers Camp. Find out more on page 25.

KOORI MAIL – 100% ABORIGINAL-OWNED 100% ABORIGINAL-CONTROLLED



# 'The Sheik of Scrubby Creek' Chad Morgan dies

By JILLIAN MUNDY



WHEN country music legend Chad Morgan died on New Years Day, aged 91, it was the

curtain call on a career spanning 72 years, and a reminder to live life to the fullest and on your own terms.

Born Chadwick William Morgan in Wondai, Queensland in 1933, Morgan was the last of Australia's country music pioneers.

Discovered on *Australia's Amateur Hour* in 1952, the radio equivalent of today's *X Factor*, Morgan soon became a household name. The bush story teller and consummate showman was known for his wit, big buck teeth (yes they are real), kooky stage antics, longevity and catchy comic hits peppered with Aussie slang and political incorrectness.

Dubbed 'clown prince of comedy' by Slim Dusty, his accolades included the Country Music Association of Australia's inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award in 2010, 2004 Medal of the Order of Australia and several gold and platinum records.

One of Australia's first independent recording artists, and at one stage the oldest living recording and performing artist, Morgan released over 30 albums, featuring classics such as *Sheik of Scrubby Creek*, *The Fatal Wedding*, *All So Nice in the Nuthouse* and *Double Decker Blowflies*.

But it was his song about his maternal grandparents – *The Ballad of Bill and Eva* – that caught my attention a few years ago.

His only serious song, it details his Aboriginality. The grandmother who raised him for a while and gave him his first guitar, Eva Hopkins (nee Anderson), was stolen generation, she was the daughter of a Kullilli woman and a Scotsman, she married Bill Hopkins, the son of a Waka Waka woman and Englishman – their only child Ivy was Morgan's mother.

Late last year Morgan had accepted my request to interview him about the song, then due to him moving further north and events in my own life I'd postponed it to the top of my new year to-do list.

Morgan seemed immortal. He had survived a serious motor bike accident and car accidents, a period of heavy drinking and smoking, and a stroke. After all, a feature-length documentary on his life is called *I'm Not Dead Yet*, due to false media reports of his death.

I was excited for the interview, hoping to hear of Morgan's personal experiences



Chad Morgan at the Longley International Hotel, Lutruwita/Tasmania, 2016. Photograph – Jillian Mundy



Chad Morgan performing as a young man.

of Aboriginal identity in the mid 1900s, especially considering all the places across so called Australia he had played – from the tiniest of outback towns to cities, country halls and shopping centres to Australia's major country music festivals and the Sydney Opera House, and his early career touring with Ashton's Circus and Slim Dusty.

When I heard news of his passing, it stood as a new year

reminder to not put off what can be done today – and that we are all, of course, immortal – even Chad Morgan.

He talks about his Aboriginality in *I'm Not Dead Yet*. "It's something I never ever hid, but I didn't flaunt it around, all the dark relations knew, so that's all that mattered," he said.

"I was always recognised where ever I go, where ever there's dark people, they just

knew, so I couldn't see any reason running around saying – hey I'm a black fella hey."

The ballad about his grandparents, first recorded with his granddaughter Caitlin in 2015, was 48 years in the making.

He couldn't seem to get it right until verses came to him in the middle of the night over the course of about a week.

"It had to be spot on," he said.

Last week I spoke with Morgan's son Chad Jnr about their family's Aboriginality.

"He was always helping Aboriginal people in his life, I know that from my aunts, the Conlans, Hopkins and Andersons, that's the three lines," Chad Jnr explained.

"I think because of the Chad Morgan persona they (rednecks) treated him different.

"Dad was the last of the Kullilli Elders, from the Bulloo River, Thargomindah, he was one of the signatories of the native title determination

"He lived just off Cherbourg when he was 5 or 6, when it was still a mission, he told me stories, his Granny Hopkins (Eva) was in a hut at Cherbourg and he used to go out and stay.

"He was one in a million, he'd

put shows on in nursing homes, he'd say 90% of these people were my fans and I'm giving them something back.

"He'd be crippled but he'd put that hat on, he'd get on stage and it would be like he was 21 again."

I also spoke with husband and wife duo 'The Muirs' – Ian Muir and Glennys Briggs, who toured with Morgan for 12 years.

Muir, also his manager, said if they had to describe Morgan in one line it would be 'a generous man with a heart of gold', it's from a song Muir and colleagues wrote about Morgan.

"He went in peace, he was ready to go by all accounts," Muir explained of his passing at Gin Gin, near Bundaberg in Queensland.

Glennys Briggs, a Tunguwurung/ Yorta Yorta/ Wiradjuri Elder who grew up on Cummeragunja Aboriginal Reserve (Murray River, NSW) credits her singing career to Morgan.

She used to sing at home, then on a break from uni tagged along on tour with Ian, joining him on stage for just one song. Chad's applaud included 'get this shelia on – she's better looking' – the rest is history.

When Briggs first knew Morgan and his wife Joanie (who passed in 2017), she didn't know of his Aboriginality. Neither did many of his fans until very recently.

"He was bought up in that era, and not (always) in the First Nations community, he was out there living as a white person but he had strong connections to his mob, never pursued it, never hid it, it never came up so he never mentioned it," she explained.

"When he finished *The Ballad of Bill and Eva*, he was really excited for me to listen to it."

He had performed at Cummeragunja back in the day and Briggs felt touring together reignited that connection.

"We felt adopted into family as soon as we started touring – that Mob connection," she said.

"And if Mob was refused entry into venues then he would instead go to them and do his show."

Morgan performed his last show in September – a free one, for Gin Gin CWA's 100th anniversary.

Chad Jnr said there will be no funeral unless it is a state one – as his father wished.

Requests had been made but last week the Queensland premier's office told the *Koori Mail* a state funeral will not be offered.

Condolences to Chad's family, friends and many fans.

Long live the memory of a legend.

RIP Chad Morgan OAM – 11/02/1933 – 01/01/2025



# Murujuga ranger vessel coming soon



PRODUCTION is underway for a new Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation (MAC) vessel to support their work in managing the islands of the Dampier Archipelago.

The custom-built 5.8-metre, rigid-hulled inflatable boat (RHIB), will be able to carry six people and is due to be delivered in mid-2025.

MAC Chairperson Peter Hicks thanked the state government through Lotterywest, who announced a \$204,232 contribution towards the boat, a trailer and equipment; and Woodside Energy, who have contributed \$390,626 towards the boat, extra camera equipment and two years of operating costs.

Ms Hicks also paid tribute to the Pilbara Ranger Network, which included his organisation, on receiving \$4.12 million over three years from Lotterywest.

"This funding has enabled MAC to do what the Elders have always wanted MAC to do which is to look after sea Country and islands, as well as the Burrup," Mr Hicks said.

"MAC has done a lot of work on the islands, including heritage and environmental research and management; taking Elders and visitors out and in recent years, conducting rock art and air quality monitoring.

"Since our former vessel, the Topaz, was retired in 2022, we have relied on chartering vessels or partnering with other organisations to get out to the islands.

"With a formal joint management



Members of the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation and Pilbara Ranger Network with representatives of the WA government and Woodside Energy.

arrangement for the islands coming soon, it is important that MAC has the skills and ability in-house to get to the islands whenever we need to.

"The RHIB was chosen because it suits inshore waters, has good access on the bow for disembarking and unloading on beaches and it will meet the Rangers'

needs as they build their boating skills.

"Five of the Rangers have completed coxswain training and are currently gaining sea hours to secure coxswain certificates.

"In addition, through MAC's partnership with Flinders University, six Rangers are working on gaining a PADI Advanced

Open Water Diver certificate to enable them to do underwater archaeology.

"A big thank you to the Environment Minister Reece Whitby through Lotterywest, and Woodside Energy Group, for their generous contributions, which have enabled us to put an order in for the boat."

## Koori Mail

ABN: 19 053 994 915

### SUBSCRIPTION FORM 2025

Have the **Koori Mail** – Australia's National Indigenous Newspaper – delivered to your home or office for the following and **SAVE!!!**

3 Months (6 editions) - \$40 (includes - \$3.64 gst) - OR

6 Months (12 editions) - \$60 (includes - \$5.45 gst) - OR

1 Year (25 editions) - \$100 (includes - \$9.09 gst) - OR

2 Years (50 editions) - \$175 (includes - \$15.91 gst)

Renewal: ☐ New Subscription: ☐ Invoice Me: ☐

Enclosed is \$..... for ☐ 3 months ☐ 6 months ☐ 1 Year ☐ 2 Years

Direct Deposit: ☐ Cheque enclosed: ☐

Please charge my Credit Card: ☐ MASTER CARD ☐ VISA ☐

(PLEASE TICK APPLICABLE CARD)

Card Expiry Date: / / CVC

Name of Card Holder:

#### DISCOUNT BULK SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Phone:  Fax:

Signature:  Contact Name:

Email:  Contact Phone No:

Mail your completed form to:

Subscription Officer

Koori Mail Newspaper

PO Box 117 Lismore NSW 2480

PH: 02 66 222 666 (ext 3) Email: subs@koorimail.com

Customer ID Number:

Please photocopy this form for your tax records.  
This will be a TAX INVOICE FOR GST when payment is made.

## Politics of the day is your business

Every since I can remember I have been politicised, I remember when I was a kid, adults would want to argue land rights with me. That was exhausting. Now everywhere you go after the failed referendum and the looming election, all people want to talk about is how much is spent on Welcome to Country's and debate why we should or shouldn't have them.

This politicising of our people and culture has only escalated since the failed referendum. We have Invasion Day, Survival Day, A Day of Mourning or Australia Day depending on your feelings and connection to the date of January 26th itself. I connect with calling it, Survival Day as I stand strong in my pride that we are still here, even though colonisers tried their hardest, for us not to be.

We have seen numerous councils and establishments renege on not celebrating Australia Day. We have an opposition leader who won't stand in front of an Aboriginal Flag and tells people to "cancel their booking" if a venue is opting out of acknowledging Australia Day. The build up is there and it's cause for us to feel unsafe and/or vulnerable in too many places around this country.

For the past decade I have attended the Share the Spirit Festival in Narm, either as an MC or just attending with my family. Being close to Mob and



Shelley Ware

sharing in our spirit of our people, gets me through the day.

This year Laura Thompson and her team at Clothing the Gaps, have a free downloadable poster of their famous logo – 'Not the Date to celebrate' for you to print and display. Manny Williams and Wollie Gela have an Invasion Day rally in Cairns, in fact the list is long of amazing humans bringing us together, social media will help you connect to your local event if you wish to.

I know that ABC have a round table discussion to be aired on ABC called *Hear Me Out* with a number of First Nations people including Kirby Bentley and Bebe Oliver sharing their own feelings and thoughts about January 26th.

I spoke to Bebe about his experience recording *Hear Me Out* he said there are a mix of

First Nations people on the show. Some will be celebrating Australia Day, some want to Change the date and others were there to discuss abolishing the date.

I asked Bebe what his hopes were from the show, he said "I hope people listen with an open mind and those who do celebrate, question why and challenge what they are celebrating and this leads to them changing their minds, together change the date or abolish the date and getting behind it."

Bebe stands with abolishing the date, as he believes as a nation, we need to do the work first, to create change in the systems that oppress people, then together embody this idea of Australia that is worth celebrating. After hearing Bebe's words, he certainly gave me some thoughts to ponder about where I stand and what I want to celebrate as a country too. There is potential for real change from this show.

I look forward to watching and listening to all of their views on *Hear Me Out*. So, keep an eye out I believe it's on our ABC screens on the 20th January.

Take care this January 26th and wherever you choose to be, I hope you feel the love of your people and old people around you.

● **Shelley Ware is a proud Yankunytjatjara and Wirangu woman from Adelaide, SA.**



# Widjabul Wia-bal celebrate native-title anniversary

By NICK PATON



THE first Widjabul Wia-bal day was held in Lismore last month, celebrating and acknowledging the anniversary of the 2022 Widjabul Wia-bal Native Title Determination.

Held at Heaps Oval in the middle of Lismore, the home of the *Koori Mail*, the event called on all nations to share in a day of gathering and connecting with music, dance, ceremony, stalls, Blak markets, a dedicated Elders tent and loads of other activities for the jarjums.

Organised by the Widjabul Wia-bal Gurrumbil Aboriginal Corporation, the event attracted hundreds of people.

Event organiser, Widjabul Wia-bal woman Aliya King said the event was a massive success.

## Awesome

"It was an awesome way for the whole community to get together to celebrate the recent Widjabul Wia-bal Native Title Determination, and overall, just a really deadly day out," Ms King told the *Koori Mail*.

"We had so many Mob turn up to support the event, but it was so good to see some of our non-Indigenous allies there sharing in the celebration with us as well," she said.

"This is an important event for us Widjabul Wia-bal Mob, because we have called this area home for thousands of years."

The Widjabul Wia-bal Native Title claim was first filed in June 2013.

The 1,559-square-kilometre claim spans half a dozen local government areas comprising Lismore, Ballina, Byron, Kyogle, Tweed and the Richmond Valley.

The Widjabul Wia-bal determination is the 18th in New South Wales since the Native Title Act came into effect in 1993.

To be granted native title, the Widjabul Wia-bal claimants had to prove evidence of continuous and unbroken connection to Country since colonisation.

The decision means Widjabul Wia-bal Traditional Owners now have the rights to carry out a number of cultural activities on non-freehold land, such as national parks and crown land.

Ms King said a highlight of the event was 'watching Mob going off' with the live performances on stage.

"Our first event was a great success, but this is just the first of many to come, and the next Widjabul Wia-bal day will be even bigger and better!"

"We hope to see you there in 2025."



Widjabul Wia-bal Day 2024 was jam-packed with performances from artists like ARIA award winner JK-47, along with a host of other deadly musicians. Pictures: Sam Jam.



Dancers perform for the crowds at the inaugural Widjabul Wia-bal day, held in Lismore last month.



The event featured a dedicated space where Widjabul Wia-bal Elders could sit down for a cuppa and a yarn.



Dancers prepare to perform in front of Mob.

ARTS



Imagine the futures  
that you want to see.  
Explore the program.

Sign up for a free Blak membership  
to get complimentary tickets.

Major Exhibition Partner

Major Technology Partner

Supporting Partners

Media Partner

CREATIVE VICTORIA

Art Processors

Panasonic

FIBERART

Showflex

SOFITEL

RRR





Walbunja woman Sharon Mason and Yindjibarndi woman Cherine Wally at Giiyong Festival on November 9. Picture: David Rogers Photography



Top row: Waiyan Foster, Sharlene Cruikshank, Nicole Smede, Jannice Luland (Auntie Jeno), Raiya Ardler, Auntie Christine Finney. Bottom row: Lizzie Luland, Nulla Luland, Auntie Pat Walker. Picture: BighART

# Shining a light on what has been lost

By MARION WILLIAMS



AMAZING, powerful, and inspiring was how two Yuin women described a cultural exchange with a group of Ngarluma and Yindjibarndi women visiting from Roebourne, Western Australia. They connected deeply as they experienced the strength of women coming together on Yuin Country and shared Dreaming stories that traverse the continent. The cultural exchange was facilitated by national arts and social change organisation BighART. It included a performance of *Punkaliyarra: Sister in Law Dreaming* by the Roebourne women at November's Giiyong Festival on Thaua Country, yarning circles, and a cultural tour of Gulaga mountain.

## Conversations lead to a new song

The Roebourne women made a big impact on Wodiwodi and Walbunja woman Auntie Jeno Luland when she watched them perform at their Songs for Freedom concert more than a year ago. "It was a really powerful message they were singing." Auntie Jeno, a member of Nowra's Mudgingaal Yangamba choir, has been following their journey since then.

"This time we met them in person and talked about things that make us strong as women," she said. "There was a real connection of matriarchs and the power of women coming together."

The conversations led them to write a song in the Dhurga, Ngarluma and Yindjibarndi languages at Bundanon, on Dharawal Country.

The song is about women standing up for themselves and their community, truth telling, listening, and how Country supports them on their journey.

"It was amazing, very powerful," Auntie Jeno said. "Hopefully we can come together

again and sing that beautiful song.

"She said the Roebourne women talked at length about the Seven Sisters Dreaming story and how many languages cut across from their desert to the ocean.

Walbunja woman Sharon Mason said stories like Waagadhi are their connection.

"We all have stories right across Australia, but we talk about it in a different way in a different language."

Another common experience was being dispossessed of their land.

Ms Mason saw that when she and her niece Ashweeni Mason visited the Roebourne women's Country.

"Their saltwater Country is covered in mines and ships. People were pushed off their land," she said. "Here a lot of people on the coast got pushed out too from Kymea down to the south coast which is why we are all related."

## An opportunity to recover lost lore

However, the Yindjibarndi and Ngarluma people around Roebourne have kept their language, customs, and traditional ways.

Ms Mason said their two-day camp at Mystery Bay, a significant site for the Yuin people, shone a light on what

South Coast women had lost.

For example, so much women's lore was not passed down the generations because of colonisation whereas women in Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory still practise that.

"We didn't have anyone to put us through lore," Ms Mason said. "Not even my great-grandmother went through it."

Ms Mason said she feels so honoured that the Roebourne women have invited her to their next lore ceremony. "Once I get to be put through that, I can start taking my people through it."

The cultural exchange reminded the women of their power when they come together and left Auntie Jeno and Ms Mason feeling inspired.

Auntie Jeno said they talked about women's obligations to Country, community, and families, and really came together spiritually and culturally on that level.

"We have to take our place and not wait for the community, take responsibility, take on the role of uplifting our women – sisters, Aunties – the obligation and the privilege," Auntie Jeno said.

"It is a cultural honour. We must honour that place we have been given," she said.

"I am very honoured to have met them at this time in my life," Ms Mason said. "It has been a long time coming."



Sharon Mason, Vivienne Mason, Michelle Adams, Nina Allen, Cherine Wally, Sam Walker, Yvonne Stewart from Nar-oo-ma Cultural Tours, Ashweeni Mason, Hannah Phillips, Kayla and Tash Brunhuber. Picture: BighART

**Jobs**  
ACADEMY

## Thinking about your return to work? Jobs Academy can help

A free online program for women and gender diverse people.

Gain access to mentoring, workshops and a supportive community to help you achieve your goals.

Apply now. Applications close 28 January 2025.

[jobsacademy.futurewomen.com](https://jobsacademy.futurewomen.com)

Blooms of Growth artwork by proud Samsep woman, Alysha Menzel.



Australian Government  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet



Australian Government  
Department of Veterans' Affairs





# News bail laws increase pressure on 'broken' system



THE roll-out of new bail laws has caused havoc with more than one per cent of the Northern Territory's population now behind bars.

Record high prisoner numbers have forced a government to convert a purpose-built police watch house into a temporary jail as new bail laws come into effect.

The Palmerston watch house, north of Darwin, will be handed over to the Department of Corrections to house an overflow of prisoners for the 'foreseeable future,' according to the territory's chief minister.

The interim chief executive of the Northern Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency, Darryl Pearce, said it was a huge concern that 88 per cent of inmates in the NT were Indigenous.

In October the Country Liberal Party repealed bail legislation to ensure anyone committing 'serious crime' would face jail time.

Those laws came into effect last Monday when seven bail applications made in the courts on



**Police made 31 arrests in 24 hours after major changes to bail laws,**

the same day were denied or referred for assessment.

"We're building contingencies in a broken system," Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro told reporters.

"We're ensuring that police operations are uninterrupted as Declan's Law ramps up and we start to see more people who

should not be out on our streets in prison."

The murder of bottle shop worker Declan Lavery by a man on bail sparked public outcry and tougher laws.

The bail changes coincide with the territory hitting a new high of 2,628 prisoners, more than one per cent of the NT's entire

population.

While numbers inside jails climb, almost 263 people have crammed for weeks inside police watch house cells.

Police Commissioner Michael Murphy said housing prisoners in watch houses was increasing pressures on police duties.

He said the practicality of having both corrections and police in the same watch house was that they operated under disparate models.

"We're dealing with people who might be affected by drugs and alcohol sometimes or other times angry," he said.

"And working in a busy environment with actual business (to do) in there is quite difficult."

Justice groups and the NT Ombudsman, the watchdog for ensuring human rights are upheld in detention, have condemned the use of watch houses.

Former NT ombudsman Peter Shoyer wrote in his annual report that the trajectory of prisoner numbers will put further pressure on ill-equipped police watch-house facilities.

"We noted there has been

minimal change to address our observations regarding flaws in the facilities' infrastructure, which severely limit their ability to meet minimum human-rights standards," he wrote.

Nyikina woman and founder of NAAJA Natalie Hunter said Aboriginal people have tried to reason with the NT government for years.

"We have tried to make them see sense, repeated the same facts and statistics, and explained the evidence," she said.

"In the Northern Territory, Black children are dehumanised at every turn."

Ms Hunter's newly formed grassroots organisation, Justice Not Jails, said the NT prison system is notoriously overcrowded, presenting serious physical and mental health risks to prisoners.

The chief minister and police commissioner both said they expect prison numbers will again climb in coming weeks.

"Our policing activity has increased, we won't be ceasing policing activity," Mr Murphy said.

—AAP



**BELVOIR ST  
THEATRE**

★★★★

"Enormously entertaining, hilarious and heartbreaking"

ARTSHUB

By  
**Declan Furber Gillick**  
Directed by  
**Mark Wilson**

**WINK-OF-THE-EYE,  
AWARD-WINNING PLAY  
OF PRIVATE LIFE, WORK  
LIFE, AND THAT THING  
CALLED 'CULTURE'.**

# JACKY

**16 JAN – 2 FEB**

**BOOK NOW**

**BELVOIR.COM.AU**

A Melbourne Theatre Company production

**MELBOURNE  
THEATRE COMPANY**

co-presented with

**Sydney  
Festival**

Indigenous  
theatre  
at Belvoir  
supported by





# Champion of native foods

By KEIRA JENKINS



GROWING up on a tropical island means being able to catch and harvest your own food, and for

Nornie Bero, it is these practices, closely tied to culture and community, which inspired a culinary career.

Bero is from the Komet tribe of the Meriam people on Mer Island and said her family instilled her love of food when she was a child.

"My dad made half of our house into a tuck shop and he used to make pumpkin dampers and pumpkin buns and make fish burgers and stuff to keep the lights on for us, to get money for the generators," she said.

"When you grow up in a family on an island you've got so many aunties and uncles that are hunting and gathering all the time and food is a big conversation in island households.

"It's always been part of my life and I've always loved the traditional foods that I grew up with."

The celebrated chef founded native food business Mabu



Torres Strait Islander chef Nornie Bero.

Mabu, and flagship restaurant Big Esso in Melbourne with plans to expand to Sydney.

"I love being Australian because we have our own flavour here, we just don't utilise it to the best that we can," Bero said.

"We're such a multicultural country and we have so many different cuisines here so I'm just putting island cuisine on the

map too and showcasing Australian food that comes out of the soil."

## Mission

Her mission to put the foods of her childhood on the map has taken her back to her home, where she recently filmed a cooking show, *Island Echoes* with Nornie Bero.

As host, Bero travels across

the Torres Strait, meeting with local community members, showcasing the landscape, making traditional foods and sharing the stories behind them.

"It was so nice to be able to do a lot of outdoor cooking... cooking on the beach and people inviting us into their back yards, or even front yards, which is usually a beach," she said.

"As a chef that's a dream

right, to be able to go back home and showcase how beautiful your home is."

Not only is Bero thrilled to bring island cuisine to the forefront, she said it's just as exciting to return to her home and share new ways to prepare traditional foods with her family and community.

"It's part of our lifeblood, the food that comes out of the ocean and in their backyards," she said.

"It's so great to be able to be someone like myself who's come all the way down here to the city and create the stuff I've been taught along the way from many different places and then take it back home and showcase what they could do with traditional foods that we already have."

In the midst of writing a new cookbook, Bero said there's a lot of things on the horizon for her and Mabu Mabu.

One thing is certain, she's determined to continue her mission to champion native ingredients and the flavours of her home.

● *Island Echoes* with Nornie Bero can be seen on SBS On Demand or weekly on NITV.

# YOU DEFINE YOUR GREATNESS

Haytham  
Adult Tertiary  
Preparation  
student

Narelle  
Teacher



GET THE **SUPPORT** YOU  
NEED TO SUCCEED

// APPLY NOW



RTO 0275 | CRICOS 03020E | PRV13003



# CIAF returns to the tanks



THE Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) is set to bring Queensland's largest and most beloved First Nations arts and cultural celebration home in 2025, returning to its original birthplace within the iconic, atmospheric, and lush botanical surrounds of Tanks Arts Centre.

Announcing the move ahead of CIAF's 16th annual season, scheduled for July, CIAF CEO Dennis Stokes highlighted Tanks Arts Centre's compelling combination of history, heritage, and state-of-the-art capability housed within its three multi-purpose tanks and rainforest setting.

"We are excited to announce our return to Tanks Arts Centre and the many opportunities it affords, not the least of which is the convenience of everything in one place," said Mr Stokes.

According to Mr Stokes, the city's much-loved arts and cultural precinct will be transformed into an immersive and integrative First Nations celebration welcoming festivalgoers to drop in, wander at leisure or stay awhile.

"With our visual art



**CIAF Acting Artistic Director Teho Ropeyarn and CIAF CEO Dennis Stokes announce the event's return to Tanks Arts Centre in 2025.**

exhibitions, live music, cultural dance and fashion performances housed within the three repurposed World War II oil tanks, the expansive outdoors activated by curated food stalls, art markets, workshops, conversations, and more, the Tanks Arts Centre is poised to offer visitors an unforgettable experience," he said.

In line with tradition, the 2025 programming begins on Thursday, July 10, with an

opening event, a ticketed event, albeit in the new surroundings of Tanks Arts Centre. As tradition dictates, the opening event will offer guests a first look at the Art Fair exhibition in a lively, social, and dramatically lit indoor/outdoor rainforest setting. The official programming will commence on Friday, July 11, with the opening of the Art Fair and close on Sunday, July 13.

CIAF Patron Henrietta Fourmile Marrie AO welcomes the return to Tanks Arts Centre

in 2025.

"CIAF has always celebrated the richness and diversity of Queensland's distinct and diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands arts and culture. Returning to the Tanks Arts Centre brings us back to the heart of this journey, where the foundation for our success was built.

"The venue's rich history and exquisite rainforest setting perfectly complement the stories and traditions we aim as First Nations custodians and artists to share with audiences," Mrs Fourmile Marrie said.

Since its inception, CIAF has become one of Australia's premier Indigenous art fairs, attracting thousands of visitors and providing a platform for artists to connect with national and international audiences.

CIAF's Acting Artistic Director, Teho Ropeyarn, said this year's theme, Pay Attention!, is a call to action for artists who promise to create an evocative and contemporary thread connecting visual and performing arts, educational talks, site activations, cultural entertainment and activities.

"After the Voice Referendum in 2023, Pay Attention!

challenges us to remain vigilant about the social, political, and cultural issues impacting First Nations communities at a profound time in our collective history," Mr Ropeyarn said.

EOI for Art Fair Showcase and Fashion Designers are now open.

● Art Fair Showcase: Artists, art centres, galleries, and collectives wanting to show artwork at CIAF 2025 have until January 31 to apply. They can access the exhibitor pack and EOI: <https://ciaf.com.au/news/ciaf-art-fair-showcase-exhibitor-pack-2025>.

● Fashion Performance Designer: Open to all First Nations fashion designers and wearable art creators living in and/or having a traditional connection to Queensland. EOI closes on January 24. Click here to apply: <https://ciaf.com.au/news/ciaf-fashion-performance-designer-eoi-now-open>

**CIAF 2025 will be held at the Tanks Arts Centre from Friday, July 11, to Sunday, July 13. Program details and ticket information will be announced soon.**

**MH**  
Museums of History NSW

## Coomaditchie The Art of Place



**WOLLONGONG  
ART GALLERY**

**wollongong**  
city of innovation



On now at the **Museum of Sydney**  
**Free entry** [mhnsw.au](http://mhnsw.au)

Coomaditchie: The Art of Place is based on the exhibition commissioned by Wollongong Art Gallery in 2023. Image: Swans of Coomaditchie Lagoon (detail), Allison Day, 2022. Wollongong Art Gallery. Photo © Bernie Fischer. Artwork © the artist



~~He loves me.~~  
isolates  
humiliates  
monitors  
manipulates  
controls

**Control in a relationship is never okay.**  
If you see a pattern of coercive control, support is available.

If you feel your relationship isn't healthy or has signs of controlling behaviour – information and support is available.



**Search**  , or visit [qld.gov.au/coercivecontrol](https://qld.gov.au/coercivecontrol)  
or call DVConnect Womensline 1800 811 811



**Queensland  
Government**



# First look at new Twin Falls gorge boardwalk in Kakadu



THE ICONIC Twin Falls gorge at World Heritage-listed Kakadu National Park will re-open in 2026 after a major infrastructure upgrade.

One of Kakadu's big two waterfalls, Twin Falls gorge has a split cascade that plunges from a 150-metre high cliff face into a deep pool.

An artist's impression released in December shows the new elevated and interconnected boardwalks and walkways that wrap around the Northern Territory site.

A new cantilevered staircase across the escarpment will give visitors a remarkable view of the gorge and the spectacular 150-metre-high waterfalls.

The day-use area, amenities and car park will also be revitalised.

The project is part of the Australian government's \$216 million infrastructure upgrade at Kakadu to help boost jobs and tourism.

Federal Member for Lingiari, Marion Scrymgour, congratulated government on its investment in upgrading infrastructure at Kakadu National Park.

"This upgrade will enhance tourist experiences of Kakadu's living landscape and exceptional natural and cultural values," she said.

"This major upgrade will see the development of new elevated and interconnected boardwalks and walkways. This critical infrastructure will not only contribute to local jobs and enhanced tourism opportunities,

it will also allow exploration of sensitive sites without the risk of damage or erosion to the environment".

The design has been developed in consultation with, and is supported by, Traditional Owners. Works are expected to start in the 2025 dry season.

Twin Falls is a significant site for Traditional Owners and one of Kakadu's major tourist spots.

Sacred site clearance has been managed through the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority in consultation with Traditional Owners.

Minister for Indigenous Australians, Senator Malarndirri McCarthy, said Kakadu National Park was one of the jewels of the Northern Territory, attracting visitors from all over Australia and the world with its spectacular natural beauty and rich Indigenous heritage.

"Working with Traditional Owners to ensure visitors can once again experience Twin Falls gorge will further enrich this experience and provide an added boost to the region's tourism sector and the communities it supports," she said.

Minister for the Environment and Water, Tanya Plibersek said for too long people had not been able to experience one of Kakadu's most magnificent sites.

"The Australian government is investing in this stunning new boardwalk and lookout to support local jobs and revitalise tourism in Kakadu, providing visitors from around Australia and the world with another reason to visit the World Heritage-listed wonder."



The proposed walkway is part of a \$216 million upgrade at Kakadu.



An artist's impression of the new cantilevered staircase across the escarpment.



Australian Government  
National Indigenous  
Australians Agency



**NIAA**

## Are you an employer in a remote community or want to become one?

You can apply for a grant to create new jobs in your community, through the Remote Jobs and Economic Development (RJED) program.

This is the first stage in replacing the Community Development Program (CDP).

Grants will support eligible employers to employ local people in new jobs by funding wages and equipment.

To apply or find out more –  
visit [www.niaa.gov.au/remote-jobs](http://www.niaa.gov.au/remote-jobs)  
call **1800 079 098** or visit your local NIAA office.







Members of the Wulgurukaba Walkabouts dance group take part in the naming ceremony.



**A FUTURE MADE  
IN AUSTRALIA  
IS FOR ALL OF US**

A Future Made in Australia economic plan will create more jobs and a stronger economy, by making more things right across our country. By investing in this plan today, we're building a better future for all. That's a Future Made in Australia.

**FUTURE MADE IN AUSTRALIA**



Australian Government

Authorised by the Australian Government, Canberra

# Chopper given Indigenous name

By ALF WILSON



ARMY Chinook helicopter 314 was given the Indigenous name of Gadaragi meaning 'strong' during a touching ceremony at Townsville RAAF base at which local Wulgurukaba Walkabouts dance group played a major role.

It was one of four Chinooks named at a ceremony in December, with the others being named Capable, Chariot and Cunning.

The CH-47F Chinook helicopters are part of the Australian Army 5th Aviation Regiment and ceremony honoured a longstanding army aviation tradition.

A traditional smoking ceremony from the Wulgurukaba Walkabouts was held which included Torres Strait Islander William Mabo who is a grandson of the late and great Eddie Mabo.

The RAAF base is on the land of the Wulgurukaba people.

Commanding Officer 5th Aviation Regiment Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Lean said the day marked the occasion for welcoming the final four, of 14 CH-47s into the regiment's fleet.

"The naming ceremony was an opportunity for us to provide the connection between the CH 47 community and defence and the local Indigenous community," he said.

The Lieutenant Colonel said three of the names were among 30 suggested by members of the aviation regiment and the final name was selected after liaison with the region's Indigenous community.

"We believe that this was an opportunity to show the connection between defence and the Chinook community that have called Townsville home for over 30 years, and the Townsville Indigenous community. I believe that this presents an opportunity to spread awareness of that connection across Australia and internationally – wherever our fleet are deployed," he said.

He said the names were selected to represent the different strengths of the aircraft.

Capable was the ability to achieve whatever is required. "This is being demonstrated by the Chinook's capability since it first started operations in Australia more than 50 years ago, and for the Fifth Aviation Regiment 30 years ago, next year.

312 is Chariot, a term used in antiquity. Chariots have long been associated with military capability and transport. The Chinook is a modern chariot of the sky. 313 is Cunning – ability, skill and expertise, and skill employed in a crafty manner."

Commander 16th Aviation Brigade Brigadier Fern Thompson said the ceremony was a reflection of the unit's deep commitment to the Townsville community.

"Providing a name is a reflection of the actual role that these helicopters will perform, and also some of the actual values and strengths in our workforce, our soldiers and our officers, who not only fly our machines, but prepare our machines," she said.

**TELSTRA NATSIAA**

2025 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards

**CALL FOR ENTRIES**

**Closes 2 March 2025**  
[magnt.net.au/natsiaa](http://magnt.net.au/natsiaa)

MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY  
NORTHERN TERRITORY



NORTHERN TERRITORY



# Wreckage cleared from Warul Kawa



A UNIQUE collaboration founded on respect and adherence to strict cultural protocols has seen the wreckage of the vessel *Reef Connection* finally removed from Warul Kawa (Deliverance Island) in the Torres Strait after nearly a decade of failed attempts.

Warul Kawa is a significant site within the Ugul Malu Kawa Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) and the success of this latest operation hinged on the guidance of the Kuiku Mabaigal (Cultural Authority) and the active involvement of Traditional Owners and rangers from five connected communities: Boigu, Saibai, Dauan, Badua, and Mabuigal.

Prior to the removal, the Kuiku Mabaigal performed a traditional cultural ceremony, seeking the approval and protection of their ancestors. This spiritual and cultural engagement ensured the safety and integrity of the operation.

The vessel capsized in 2015, and despite multiple removal attempts by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, it remained stranded. Its presence posed ongoing risks to local wildlife and ecosystems.

The removal was made possible through Maritime Safety Queensland's (MSQ) War on Wrecks Program, which funded Carpentaria Contracting to carry out the operation. Carpentaria Contracting worked under the close supervision of Kuiku Mabaigal representatives and rangers, including three original passengers

from the 2015 incident.

Malu Kiai senior ranger Nelson Gibuma, one of the vessel's passengers, expressed his deep relief.

"I am very happy, I feel good. I'm glad they took the boat off of Warul Kawa," he said.

TSRA chairperson Napau Pedro Stephen AM praised the collaborative effort, highlighting its significance for both cultural and environmental preservation.

"The successful removal of the vessel is a testament to the strength of our cultural practices and the importance of partnerships. By working together and respecting cultural protocols, we've been able to restore Warul Kawa's natural and cultural heritage, ensuring it remains a place of significance for future generations."

This operation not only restores Warul Kawa but also serves as a model for integrating cultural practices into broader environmental management efforts. The removal of the *Reef Connection* vessel demonstrates how cultural alignment can lead to successful outcomes.

The operation concluded with a closing ceremony, reaffirming the cultural significance of Warul Kawa and honouring the ancestors.

Looking ahead, the Ugul Malu Kawa IPA remains committed to ongoing cultural and environmental management.

As part of this commitment, results from the November 2024 monitoring of invasive black rats on Warul Kawa will be shared with Traditional Owner families in early 2025, with the aim of developing an education project.



Kuiku Mabaigal ranger of Boigu, Ishmael Gibuma, Malu Kiai ranger Nelson Gibuma and Simakal ranger Laurie Elisala, previous passengers of MV *Reef Connection*, observe the removal of the vessel wreckage.



Kuiku Mabaigal rangers, Land and Sea Management staff and Create videographer attending the Ugul Malu Kawa IPA vessel survey trip.



Australian Government  
National Indigenous  
Australians Agency



## NAIDOC Local Grants 2025 Applications Now Open

The NAIDOC Local Grants online application for 2025 is now open. NAIDOC Local Grants support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and supporting organisations to deliver local NAIDOC Week activities and events in communities and regions around Australia.

Register and complete an application at GrantConnect:  
[www.grants.gov.au](http://www.grants.gov.au).

Applications close **Thursday 20 February at 3.00pm AEDT**.

The 2025 NAIDOC Week theme is "The Next Generation: Strength, Vision, Legacy". Find out more about NAIDOC Week 2025 at:  
[www.naidoc.org.au](http://www.naidoc.org.au).

0364NS\_5354

## Learn today. Lead tomorrow.

Experience a university degree with the flexibility to maintain your work, family and cultural commitments.

Study education, arts, law, nursing, social work, land and sea country management, public health or Indigenous research through our Community Based Delivery.

[deakin.edu.au/nikeri](http://deakin.edu.au/nikeri)  
**1800 063 383**

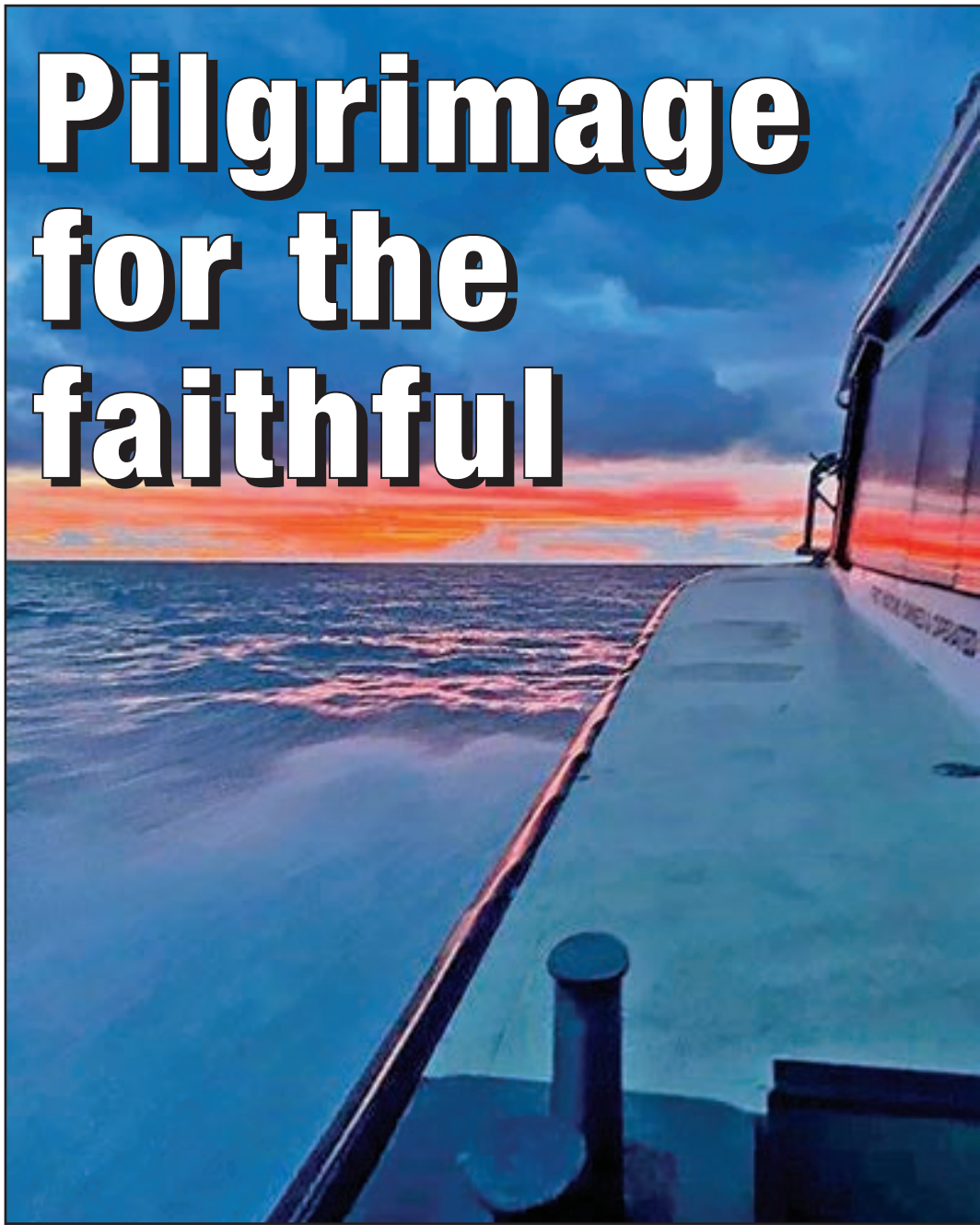
Deakin University CRICOS Provider Code: 00113B

NIKERI  
INSTITUTE





# Pilgrimage for the faithful



Sunset from the boat off Masig Island in the Torres Strait.

By ALF WILSON



ABORIGINAL and Torres Strait Islanders from around Australia and as far away as WA and Palm Island along with many locals attended a "Faith and Salvation Conference" on Masig Island in the Torres Strait in the lead up to Christmas.

It was held at the Yorke Island Community Hall from December 18 to 22 and was organised by Australian Christian Churches (ACC).

People from many religious denominations attended and it was the first time it was on Masig. Many

visitors from around the TS and NPA travelled to Masig on outboard motor powered dinghies. Others from south caught planes.

## So popular

Coordinator Evelyn Billy told the *Koori Mail* it was originally planned to be a "women's conference" but was so popular that men and children were included.

People were there from most TS islands including Poruma, Warraber, Daru and also from the NPA including Bamaga, also Cairns, Palm island, Perth in WA and Townsville, she said.

Mrs Billy said that visitors were billeted with family and friends on

Masig and packed into the hall.

"We travelled for 22 hours on rugged roads from Townsville and caught the boat *Baba Zorro* from Seisia from the NPA to Masig which was a seven-hour trip via sea, rough weather or not we were determined to deliver this God-led conference. God placed this vision in my heart to bring this conference to Masig, I didn't think twice. it was a rough journey, but God was in control.

"The community loved it. There was even a market day for the local church to help with their fundraiser to build a church," she said.

There was also a well-attended feast hosted by the local community at which everybody

caught up in a spirit of goodwill and friendship.

Mrs Billy said on the return boat trip from Masig after the last day, it stopped at Waiben to drop people off from there and others who could go to Horn Island and get a flight south.

"The rest got off at Seisia and drove back home in rain," she said.

## Father Ned

Enthusiastic Mrs Billy was glowing in her praise of Masig religious leader Father Ned Mosby for his support and assistance.

"The people of Masig were wonderful and many were at the event and some came from as far away as Perth in WA," she said.

Organisers are confident that it will be an annual event on Masig.

The Australian Christian Churches (ACC), formerly known as Assemblies of God in Australia, is a network of Pentecostal churches in Australia.

It is affiliated with the World Assemblies of God Fellowship, which is the largest Pentecostal denomination in the world. Each individual church in the network is self-governing, but commits itself to work together with other churches for the purpose of mutual support and the spread of the gospel.

A similar conference will be held at Palm Island over Easter and Mrs Billy said a lot of TS people have indicated they will be there.



On the boat off Seisia are Olive Napatali and young Zilla Billy.



Gibson Billy and his wife Evelyn Billy speak.



Lindsay Malone, left, and Father Ned Mosby.



Phoebe Nona and Maria Frank.

**TAFE NSW**

## Be yourself

TAFE NSW supports more than 35,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. With dedicated Aboriginal staff, culturally safe spaces, and specialist services, we're here to help you on your learning journey.

Learn new skills through our wide range of high quality education and training courses. Explore courses in Building & Trades, Agriculture, Aboriginal Art, Culture, and Languages.

Be deadly at TAFE NSW.

Enrol now for Semester 1, 2025.

[tafensw.edu.au](http://tafensw.edu.au)

131 601

RTD: 00003 | CRICOS 00581E | HELP PRIV120-48





Standing in front of baby Jesus, Joseph and Mary are Reneisha Smith, Ternita Sands, Thomas Sands and Schreckar Sands from Yarrabah.

# Dancing up the Christmas spirit

By ALF WILSON



TORRENTIAL rain did not daunt Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, women and children who participated in the unique Stable at Riverway Christmas event in Townsville.

It was scheduled to be held at Riverway Park beside the fresh water reaches of Ross River from December 18 to 22.

However the heavens opened for the majority and restricted the amount of time it was on to several hours on one night, until the final evening when the rain disappeared and the people turned up in big numbers.

The event had a lifelike Bethlehem town with Roman soldiers, lots of animals, craftspeople from the Bible, shepherds, Three Wise Men and stalls bringing visitors to the Christmas story.

## Highlights

One of the highlights was the Shalom Indigenous Dancers with youth from many communities such as Palm Island, Mount Mornington Island, Yarrabah, Cherbourg, Torres Strait, NPA and Cape York.

Dance group co-ordinator Pastor Andrew Bollom told the *Koori Mail* that Uncle David and Auntie Roberta Mundraby and



Arthur Kennedy Young the song man leaves the ground as he leads the dancers.

other family members came down from Yarrabah to dance with students from Shalom Family Church.

"The crowd was moved by their North, South, East and West dance to open Bethlehem and represent the cross, and people as one," Pastor Bollom said.

Yarrabah youngsters Reneisha Smith, Ternita Sands, Thomas Sands and Schreckar Sands enjoyed checking out Baby Jesus, Joseph and Mary.

Auntie Roberta was with her daughter Geraldine Choikee when the *Koori Mail* saw them and despite the rain they enjoyed the Stable.

"Rain didn't dampen out spirits. I came herer to see my grand children dancing and Pastor Bollom connected with them through our church at

Yarrabah. It was the first time I had been to this event and we arrived in Townsville the day before the opening night and had to leave before the final night as we heard the roads to Yarrabah may be closed due to flooding. But we arrived home safely," Auntie Roberta said.

## Preparation

The event took months of preparation by volunteers from the Combined Churches of Townsville and this will be the 24th year. One of the event organisers Richard Hosking said a total of 17,405 men, women and children attended.

"We lost one full night due to heavy rain. It also drizzled for three nights and on the last one we had a massive 7,205 people there," Mr Hosking said.

IBA INDIGENOUS BUSINESS AUSTRALIA

## PREPARE FOR HOME OWNERSHIP



IBA supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to get ready for home ownership and to buy their own home.

Lock in some time to prepare for your home ownership journey! Our 2025 info sessions are now open.

Scan the QR code below or visit [iba.gov.au/homesinfosessions](http://iba.gov.au/homesinfosessions)



1800 107 107 [iba.gov.au](http://iba.gov.au)





# Quokkas discovered in Perth hills



A NEW quokka population was discovered late last year in the Perth Hills by local charity, Bibbul Ngarma Aboriginal Association Inc (BNAA). The quokkas were discovered through the BoorYul-Bah-Bilya program – a recent initiative that aims to address declining river health through creation of a new type of community catchment plan.

This is the first time that quokkas have been photographed by the general public in the Perth Hills and is an important finding for conservation of the species. While known to occur in isolated locations in the Darling Range, quokkas are rarely seen by the wider community. Their exact location will remain confidential and the best place to see quokkas is still on Wadjemup-Rottnest Island.

Quokkas are best known on Wadjemup-Rottnest Island although small groups live in the forests of Noongar Boodja.

These mostly exist around Jarrahdale, Dwellingup, Collie, Nannup, Northcliffe, Denmark, the Stirling Ranges, Green Ranges and Bald Island.

Quokkas were once abundant in south-west WA but have reduced dramatically since the 1930s, likely due to foxes and widespread land clearing practices for agriculture and mining. In the 1920s, quokkas were considered a pest of pine plantations and farms near Perth and were actively hunted and poisoned.

Current threats to mainland quokkas include:



A quokka caught on camera in the Perth Hills. Picture: Tim Blake.

- Predation by foxes and cats
- Habitat loss due to land clearing, Phytophthora dieback and destruction by feral pigs
- Increased bushfire intensity and burning of swamps and creek lines
- Reduced rainfall and drying of wetland habitats

Quokkas are a threatened species under both state and Commonwealth legislation. In WA, they are listed as 'vulnerable' under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) criteria.

Nationally, quokkas are listed as 'vulnerable' under the

Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

Quokkas have been studied extensively on Wadjemup-Rottnest but research on mainland quokkas is limited, which limits the development of strategies to protect them. This new quokka population was identified by BoorYul-Bah-Bilya volunteers as part of a conservation audit to assess the health of the Mandoon Bilya (Helena River) catchment.

The finding will assist the ongoing management of quokkas in the Perth Hills.

BoorYul-Bah-Bilya (BBB) is the first program of its kind to consider the environmental,

cultural and social values of a river in one integrated plan. It uses the Mandoon-Helena River to create a model process that can be applied to any river by any community. The BBB program aims to restore river health, protect cultural significance, improve social amenity, support sustainable economic growth and reconnect people with the many values of rivers.

BNAA are working with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions to manage the discovery and hope it will lead to additional resources for the WA Government's Quokka Recovery Plan (DBCA, 2013), including:

- More surveys, monitoring and research to understand threats and improve management
- Protecting key populations and habitats including increased feral animal control
- Implementing fire and forest management strategies to protect identified populations
- Increasing public awareness of threats to mainland quokka populations

BNAA senior Elder, Greg Ugle, said it was an important find and as a Noongar Elder 'my intention is to be sure to protect these little animals'.

BNAA chairperson, Walter McGuire, said the discovery of these quokkas on Whadjuk Boodja demonstrates the importance of community-led programs like BoorYul-Bah-Bilya.

"As Noongar Traditional Owners, we have the language, stories and knowledge to look after this land as we have done since time began. Through BoorYul-Bah-Bilya, we will do everything we can to ensure that quokkas do not become another in a long list of our extinct or endangered native animals."

BNAA director, Francesca Flynn said it was hoped that this important discovery will help to strengthen efforts to protect mainland quokkas and other threatened native species that are under constant threat from land clearing, fires, feral predators and our changing climate.

"I acknowledge the huge effort of BoorYul-Bah-Bilya volunteers, including Tim Blake, who has purchased fauna cameras and dedicated many volunteer hours."



THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND AUSTRALIA | CREATE CHANGE

## Step into a Future of Innovation

### Indigenous Opportunities in Engineering, Architecture, and IT at UQ



The University of Queensland's Faculty of Engineering, Architecture and Information Technology (EAIT) is excited to invite Expressions of Interest (EOI) for our Indigenous PhD and Academic Pathway Programs (Identified s105). These roles are dedicated to increasing Indigenous representation among UQ staff and students.

Brisbane River element from A Guidance Through Time by Quandamooka artists Casey Coolwell and Kyra Mancktelow.

CRICOS Provider 00025B • TEQSA PRV12080

#### PhD Pathways Program

This full-time, four-year fixed-term position is your pathway to an impactful academic career. The role allows you to engage in Higher Degree by Research (HDR) studies while gaining on-the-job academic training and experience with an academic position at Level A.

#### Academic Pathway Program

This full-time, permanent position is your chance to join a prestigious institution in a program tailored to develop your academic skills with a personalised structure – providing support, training, and mentorship to help you thrive in your chosen field. Academic levels are available from Associate Lecturer (Level A) to Professor (Level E), based on your skills and experience.

#### Who should apply?

These positions are open exclusively to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander candidates. Whether you hold a degree, extensive tertiary study, or a PhD in a relevant discipline, we value your unique perspective. Join us in making a difference at The University of Queensland. Your journey starts here!

Scan the QR codes to find out more or visit [careers.uq.edu.au](https://careers.uq.edu.au) and submit your EOI by **31 January 2025**



R-43437



R-42672



# Funding helps improve village life



ABORIGINAL communities in Condobolin are enjoying the completion of \$2.8 million in essential

infrastructure upgrades funded by the NSW Government to support social, economic and employment benefits for the area.

The Roads to Home program in the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) funded Condobolin Local Aboriginal Land Council to upgrade infrastructure at the Willow Bend village in Condobolin.

Condobolin Local Aboriginal Land Council CEO Louise Davis said the infrastructure upgrades had made a big difference.

"The village looks a lot better than it did before and the improvements have given residents ownership and pride in the community," she said.

"As part of the project, local residents got work and training with machinery including excavators and backhoes, and in fencing, and concreting."

Infrastructure improvements have included upgraded roads and guttering, footpaths, an amenities block, stormwater drainage and sewerage infrastructure, new street lighting, new house fencing, upgrades to



Members of the Willow Bend community celebrated the completion of their Roads to Home upgrades.

the community basketball and tennis courts and public gardens, landscaping, a community yarning circle, and a new village entrance sign.

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty David Harris said the Roads to Home program was correcting an historic injustice.

"Aboriginal communities on former missions and reserves across NSW were left to fend for themselves without the types of infrastructure and services that communities in the rest of the state take for granted," he said.

"It is a unique program that takes a partnership approach to

empower Aboriginal landowners to make decisions about essential infrastructure upgrades in their communities to improve social outcomes while providing training and employment opportunities.

"We know there are better Closing the Gap outcomes when local Aboriginal communities and

people drive shared decision-making and self-determination."

Upgrades have also occurred to a levee bank at the village which has been reinforced in sections and new flood gates and drainage flaps installed to help control flooding from the nearby Lachlan River.

The delivery of infrastructure upgrades to normal standards enhances quality of life for residents and improves access to services, including household waste collection, postal delivery, emergency vehicles and community transport.

A key feature of Roads to Home projects is ensuring there are employment and training opportunities for local Aboriginal communities. The Condobolin project provided training for 10 residents and work for 8.

"It's fantastic to see these upgrades delivered to bring infrastructure up to acceptable standards to benefit the residents of the Willow Bend village in Condobolin," Minister for Lands and Property Steve Kamper said.

"Infrastructure upgrades such as these are very important for Aboriginal communities as they improve quality of life and empower residents by supporting better health and safety and facilitating improved access to community services."

FEEL THE  
SYDNEY SIDE  
OF SUMMER  
Search [sydney.com](https://www.sydney.com)





# Yindjibarndi Energy Corporation pushing for sustainable power for the Pilbara



THE Yindjibarndi Energy Corporation has taken another important step in their drive toward developing large-scale renewable energy projects in the Pilbara with the WA Government awarding the company project priority status for the Chichester Range Transmission Corridor.

The Chichester Range Corridor is one of four priority corridors identified by the WA Government for the development of new common-use transmission infrastructure in the Pilbara.

This designation ensures that YEC, as the successful proponent will receive the necessary support and resources for timely development, unlocking access for renewable energy projects within the western Pilbara to the market.

YEC chief executive Craig Ricaton said it was fantastic news for Yindjibarndi Energy Corporation.

"As one of Australia's largest Indigenous-led renewable energy initiatives, YEC is proud to be developing large-scale renewable energy projects to decarbonise Pilbara mining and industrial companies," he said.

"Importantly, this designation also allows YEC to access government support and funding through the government's Rewiring the Nation program, further supporting our vision for a First Nations led, greener future in the region."

In further development YEC also received DA approval for the Jinbi solar farm from the City of Karratha's Joint Development Assessment Panel (JDAP).

Located on Yindjibarndi Ngurra (Country) in the Pilbara region this project is the first of



Yindjibarndi community members at a meeting with representatives of the ACEN Corporation. Picture: Ngaarda Media.

YEC's renewable projects to receive development approval.

While the project is still subject to a number of other internal, external and regulatory approvals, this approval represents a crucial step forward.

The project includes 75MWac of solar power, with the potential to expand to 150MWac on a greenfield site. Future plans may also incorporate a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).

"The approval for Project Jinbi brings us one step closer to realising our vision for a First Nations led, greener future in the region," Mr Ricato said.

"As one of Australia's largest Indigenous-led renewable energy initiatives, YEC is proud to be developing large-scale renewable energy projects to decarbonise Pilbara mining and industrial companies."

Michael Woodley, CEO of

Yindjibarndi Aboriginal Corporation, said the approval marked a significant moment for the community which has been directly involved in conducting heritage and environmental surveys.

"This project represents not only a step towards an environmentally sustainable future but also the empowerment and economic development of the Yindjibarndi community.

"Through our partnership with the ACEN Corporation, we are demonstrating the vital role Indigenous leadership can play in driving innovative renewable energy solutions which can benefit both communities and industry. I also want to take the opportunity to thank both Rio Tinto and the WA State Government for their support in bringing this project closer to fruition."



Michael Woodley, CEO of Yindjibarndi Aboriginal Corporation.

# Landmark Yamatji agreement sees first transfer of land



THE Yamatji Nation and the West Australian Government have finalised the transfer of the first 10 reserves to Bundi Yamatji Aboriginal Corporation, initiating the delivery of up to 149,090 hectares for the Yamatji Land Estate.

The transfers late last year mark the formal creation of the Yamatji Land Estate agreed through the landmark Yamatji Nation Indigenous Land Use Agreement executed in 2020.

Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation SRC acting CEO Luka Gray said he was thrilled to see the first 10 reserves approved for transfer under the Yamatji



Bundi Yamatji Aboriginal Corporation (BYAC) Chair Ross Councillor.

"This marks a pivotal moment for our people in securing our ancestral lands and paving the way for future generations of Yamatji people to thrive

economically and culturally in the Mid-West," he said.

Covering approximately 48,000 square kilometres of land in the State's Mid West region, the Yamatji Nation Indigenous Land Use Agreement resolves the Western Australian Government's compensation liability for the impairment and/or extinguishment of native title in the agreement area and includes a package of benefits for the Yamatji people, totalling approximately \$500 million.

The Yamatji Land Estate will be drawn from the Crown land estate and eight Aboriginal Lands Trust properties in the Geraldton area. It will establish the Yamatji people as one of the largest landholders in the Mid-West and provide a

diverse asset base through which to build self-determination and long-term economic independence for Aboriginal people in the region.

Bundi Yamatji Aboriginal Corporation (BYAC) Chair Ross Councillor said the importance of the land transfers could not be overstated.

"They represent a significant stride towards self-governance and empowerment for Yamatji people," he said. "BYAC is dedicated to leveraging these resources responsibly to foster a prosperous and culturally vibrant future for our community in the Mid West."

West Australian Lands Minister John Carey said the return of the land marked an important first

step in delivering on a key commitment of the Yamatji Nation Indigenous Land Use Agreement.

"The Cook Government recognises this historic return of land to Traditional Owners and remains committed to working with Yamatji Southern Regional Corporation and the landholding bodies to deliver the Yamatji Land Estate," he said.

Aboriginal Affairs Minister Dr Tony Buti said the significant land transfer was the result of the diligent resolve of the Yamatji people and their strong and enduring connection to Country.

"It will serve as a catalyst for realising the social, cultural and economic prospects of Yamatji land to its highest potential," he said.



# Celebrating culture



STRONG men and women came together to shake the earth at the Yuin Nation Birriga Bunaan. They travelled from Canberra, Victoria, Queensland and across NSW to celebrate Yuin culture at the foot of Gulaga on Saturday, January 4.

Uncle Warren Foster organised the Birriga Bunaan "to bring our people together for healing people and healing Country".

"Last year's theme for NAIDOC Week was keep the fire burning so we want to keep the fire burning and our culture going," the Djiringanj man said.

He also organised the Nation Dance Yuin in 2019 and the Yuin Nation Birriga Bunaan in January 2024.

"We are trying to do it annually because people are crying out for it," Uncle Warren said. "They need something like this to come together in unity."

In her opening remarks to the more than one thousand performers and onlookers, Walbunja woman Auntie Loretta Parsley said, "let the spirits dance with you and the ancestors watch over you".

The ancestors would have seen much hugging, laughter and joking as friends and families reunited at Gulaga.

"There is no better spot to dance than at the foot of our Mother Mountain," Uncle Warren said. "Gulaga holds a lot of our creation stories."

Birriga Bunaan, meaning big celebration or big dance, was funded by Aboriginal Affairs NSW, Biamanga National Park board of management, and the August 2024 Songs of Yuin fundraiser.



Male dancers at the Birriga Bunaan.

Pictures and words: Marion Williams



Traditional custodians and Elders Pauline Thomas, Loretta Parsley, Lynette Goodwin, Maureen Davis, Dori Davis and Ronald Davis.



Dancers entering the ring at the Birriga Bunaan.



Kaiden and Reece Timbery.



Dancers entering the ring included women pushing prams and pushchairs.



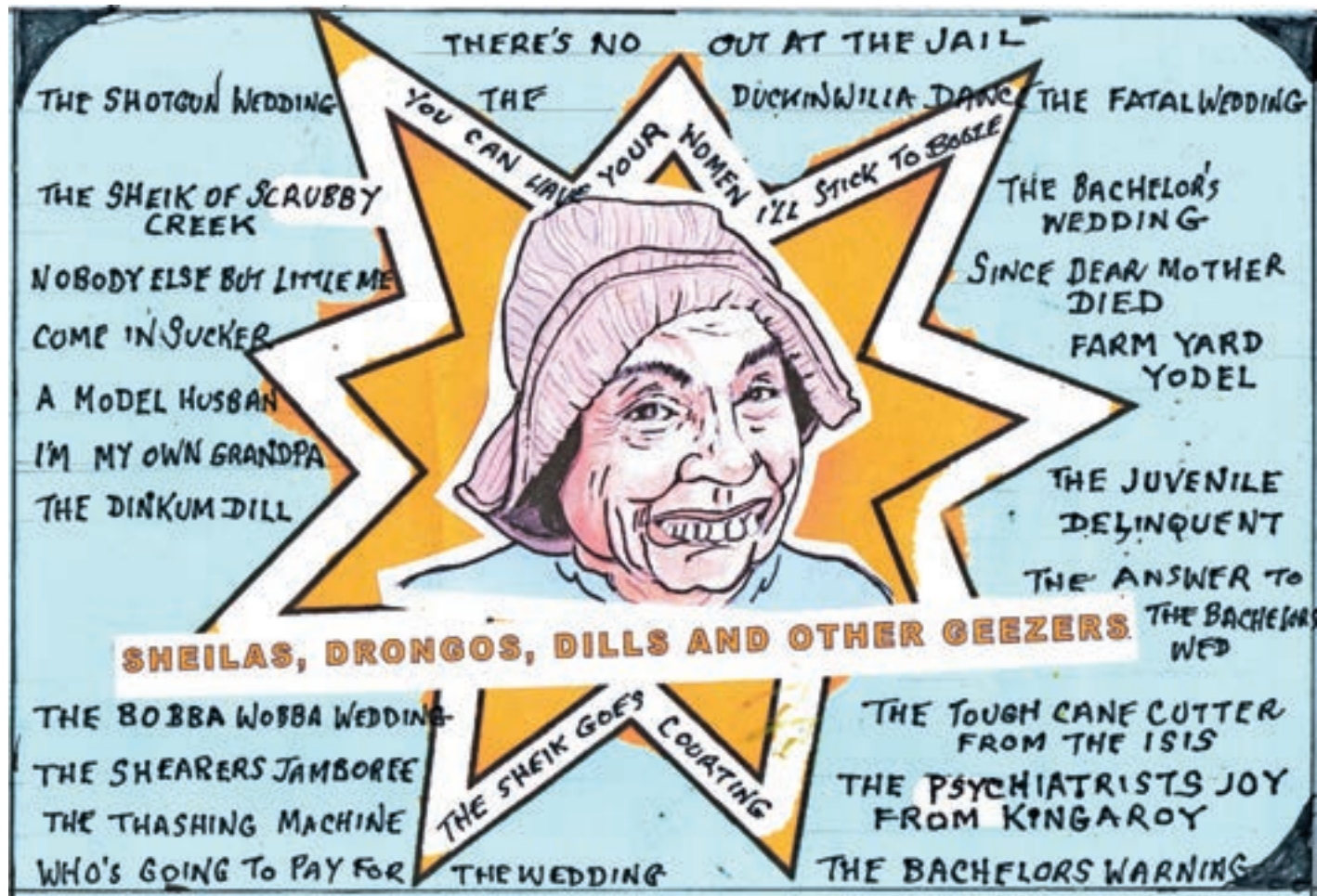
Men carried babies into the ring.



Dancers at the foot of Mother Mountain Gulaga.



## Danny Eastwood's view



## A YARN WITH...



## Noreen George Doomadgee Queensland

**Favourite bush tucker?**  
Kangaroo.

**Favourite saltwater food?**  
Fish.

**Favourite drink?**  
Orange juice.

**Favourite music?**  
Johnny Cash songs.

**Favourite sport?**  
Rugby league. I love the Brisbane Broncos.

**Favourite read?**  
Fiction, but not sci-fi or murder.

**Favourite holiday destination?**  
Anywhere on Country.

**What are watching on TV?**  
I don't watch much.

**What do you like in life?**  
Hunting for fish.

**What don't you like in life?**  
Alcohol and drugs.

**Which person would you most like to meet?**  
Jack Thompson the actor.

**Which people would you invite for a night around the campfire?**  
All of my family.

**Who or what inspires you?**  
My homeland Country.

**What is your ultimate goal?**  
To encourage many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to go to uni and follow their dreams.

**What would you do to better the situation for Indigenous people?**  
Make sure our culture is passed on to the young ones.

## Quote



**"It is important to acknowledge and celebrate the capacity and innovation that is part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture."**

– Professor Pat Dudgeon, Bardi woman from the Kimberley region of Western Australia.

● See page 25

## Unquote

## Bail laws deliver long-term pain

**C**HAOS has reigned supreme in the first two weeks of 2025 with evidence emerging that new bail and sentencing laws are biting hard in both the Northern Territory and Queensland.

According to an AAP report, more than one percent of the Northern Territory's population are now behind bars with the new CLP government forced to convert a purpose-built police watch house into a temporary jail with the Palmerston watch house, north of Darwin, handed over to the Department of Corrections to house an overflow of prisoners.

Meanwhile in Queensland, a report delivered to the state parliament from the Office of the Public Guardian last week reveals that 120 children aged between 10 and 13 spent at least one night in an adult watch house during 2023-24.

Both Northern Territory and Queensland went through elections last year with the Country Liberal Party and the Liberal Nationals sweeping into office on a 'Tough on Crime' pitch to their respective electorates.

Of course it's young Aboriginal Australians hit hardest by these changes with both the Northern Territory Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro and Queensland Premier David Crisafulli sweeping aside advice from Indigenous



justice experts advising against the clampdowns.

Nyikina woman and founder of North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) Natalie Hunter told AAP Aboriginal people have tried to reason with the NT government for years.

"We have tried to make them see sense, repeated the same facts and statistics, and explained the evidence," she said. "In the Northern Territory, Black children are dehumanised at every turn."

This comes after Karly Warner, Chair of National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services, warned in September last year of a dramatic increase in child incarceration as governments shifted back to failed, punitive policies.

'Lock 'em up' strategies give conservative voters a short sharp hit of retribution but in the end they just add to the massive burden of trauma that will finally and inevitably have to be faced by the whole nation.

So at the risk of stating the bleeding obvious, again – In the short-term we should be thinking long-term.

## KOORI MAIL 100% ABORIGINAL-OWNED

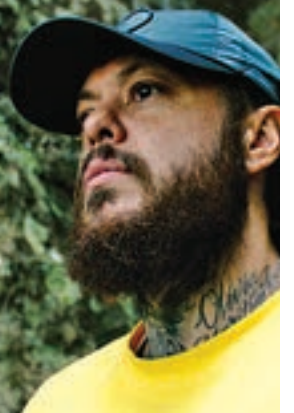
The Koori Mail is owned by five Aboriginal organisations on Bundjalung country in northern NSW – Kurrachee Cooperative (Coraki), Bunjum Cooperative (Cabbage Tree Island), Nungera Cooperative (Maclean), Buyinbin Cooperative (Casino) and the Bundjalung Tribal Society (Lismore).





# Nooky turns up the respect for women and girls

"We may not always be able to control what our kids are seeing online, but we can try to understand it better. The more we know about what they're seeing and hearing, the more we can help them to muffle and tune out the toxic noise and support them to hear the right voices."



**F**IRST Nations Ambassador, Nooky, a proud Yuin and Thunghutti rapper, is taking aim at the new breed of toxic influencers by encouraging all First Nations people to Turn Up Respect towards women and girls.

The producer and founder of the We Are Warriors program warned that powerful, new social media operators like Andrew Tate and Nick Fuentes are getting into kids' ears and spreading toxic, disrespectful messages.

"If our kids keep seeing and hearing sexist and disrespectful content, it can warp their views on how women and girls should be treated," Nooky said.

"As a musician, I'm encouraging Mob to come together to turn down the volume on these negative voices, and instead turn up the volume on respect. Turn it up Loud and Proud!"

The Koori Mail's CHRISTIAN MORROW caught up with Nooky for a chat about the new campaign.

**Koori Mail:** Are we right in presuming that the toxic voices you are talking about, the ones encouraging disrespect toward women, are people like Andrew Tate and Nick Fuentes – particularly with his 'Your body, My choice' type comments?

**Nooky:** Those two are just some of the many negative voices our kids, especially our boys, are being exposed to online. And it's not just about them. It's also about how the social media platforms work in allowing these toxic voices to thrive.

Whether it's influencers or even anonymous comments, the disrespect spreads because it gets clicks and

engagement, and seeing and hearing these things can give our young people the wrong idea about how women and girls should be treated.

The sorts of stuff our kids are hearing online include sexist attitudes, men hating on women, nasty hateful language, treating women like objects, comments like 'Women should obey their partners' or 'Look at the way she dresses, you know she wants it'...that sort of thing...

But the more we know about what they're seeing and hearing, the more we can help muffle and turn off those voices, and say to our kids, 'that's not ok.'

**KM:** Are social media companies and by extension their owners, like Mark Zuckerberg and Elon Musk, doing enough to filter out these harmful comments and toxic comments?

**NOOKY:** I think that everyone has a part to play, including social media companies, who need to take steps to address harmful and toxic content that young people are being exposed to.

This is about protecting young people from being bombarded with content that normalises disrespect and violence, especially against women and girls. Social media platforms need to do more, but it's also up to all of us to call out this behaviour.

We need to know what our kids are seeing online, which I get can be really hard. Often, social media platforms directly target our kids. Our kids might not deliberately set out to hear or see bad stuff, but once they watch just one of these toxic videos or engage with a post, more and more show up in their feed due to the social media algorithms.

We may not always be able to control

what our kids are seeing online, but we can try to understand it better. The more we know about what they're seeing and hearing, the more we can help them to muffle and tune out the toxic noise and support them to hear the right voices.

**KM:** Is music the best teacher for young people, particularly Aboriginal youth, in terms of developing self-respect and respect for others?

**NOOKY:** Music is just one of the tools that I use to help teach young people about respect through my We are Warriors program.

To me, music is more than just a sound, it's a connection to culture. Growing up, I had a very bad period. I was dealing with some dark stuff. But music kept me out of trouble, and the microphone was like a therapy session. It's like all the frustrations I was feeling would be put into the microphone which was the best listener. It allowed me to just let it all out and use it to create something good.

I started We Are Warriors about two years ago, and I always say that you can't be what you can't see, so I set out to highlight and amplify stories of Blak success through events, workshops and content.

In the workshops, some which are centred around music, kids learn all about healthy relationships, respect for self, and respect for others and their stories. They also learn how to express their emotions appropriately, and it builds their confidence and overall self-esteem, which helps foster developing positive relationships.

But as I said, music is just one tool. There are some deadly Blak family violence prevention programs out there

that are making a significant difference by teaching respect in our communities, like 'YoungNDeadly Dijun Way' workshops from Broome, 'U Right Sis?' from Alice Springs, Banatjarl Strongbala Wimun's program in Katherine, and 'Kayin Ipiakzil' from up north in Queensland's Thursday Island.

**KM:** Is there any other advice you would give young men and women when it comes to developing healthy relationships?

**NOOKY:** My advice would be to remember that what you see online doesn't define you or your values. The internet is full of voices, and not all of them are worth listening to. When you come across something that feels wrong or makes you uncomfortable, trust that feeling. You have the power to choose what influences you, so surround yourself with positive messages and people who uplift and respect you.

Don't be afraid to talk to someone you trust – whether it's a friend, family member, or Elder – about what you're seeing and how it's affecting you. It's important to have those yarns and not keep it bottled up. Most importantly, know that you're not alone. We're all in this together, and we all have a role to play in turning up respect and creating a positive environment, both online and offline.

As part of the campaign, some incredible family violence-prevention programs that are making a significant impact in First Nations communities are being showcased on the Turn Up Respect platform.

● For more information go to: <https://www.respect.gov.au/first-nations-resource>.



# Reflecting on the devastation of Cyclone Tracy 50 years on

By TANGIORA HINAKI



CHRISTMAS just gone marks the 50th anniversary of Cyclone Tracy, the devastating natural disaster that all but obliterated the city of Darwin on Christmas Day, 1974.

The Category 4 storm claimed the lives of 66 people, seriously injured 145 others, and left thousands homeless.

Images of the destruction shocked viewers worldwide, showing a city wiped off the map.

Christine Ross, whose family survived the cyclone, recalls the harrowing night vividly.

"Honestly, if I could close my eyes now, it would take me directly back to that night," Ms Ross said.

"I think with events like that, you're forever impacted."

On Christmas Eve 1974, the Ross family had been looking forward to the celebrations ahead, with a full house of 13, including Christine's seven siblings, parents, aunt, uncle, and cousins.

However, the festive spirit quickly became terror as Cyclone Tracy tore through Darwin with winds exceeding 240 km/h.

Ms Ross described the frantic decisions families made to survive.

"We were a bit fortunate; we didn't have to cram into a car," Ms Ross said.

"Otherwise, we would have been in trouble, but quite a few people in Darwin had to do that," she said.



December 2024 marked 50 years since Darwin city was all but destroyed by Cyclone Tracy.

"When a cyclone's coming – they say the safest place is always the bathroom. So, people went to the bathroom first. Then, as it got more and more vicious through the night, they realised the danger and thought, 'Well, the car's underneath', and because many of our houses were on stilts, sheltering in cars was probably the one thing that saved many families."

The Ross family initially stayed in their fibro house but sought sturdier refuge when the eye of the cyclone passed over.

"That's when we moved next

door to our neighbour's place – because they had a brick house, whereas ours was fibro," Ms Ross recalled.

The aftermath of Cyclone Tracy was catastrophic, with over 30,000 people evacuated from Darwin, many as far as South Australia.

Ms Ross expressed gratitude for the support her family and others received during the recovery.

"Thank you for inviting me to talk about it because it was the biggest natural event impact on Australia – one we'll never forget," Ms Ross said.

"We thanked all the people of Australia at the time for wrapping their arms around us and supporting us when we were evacuated as refugees across Australia."

Cyclone Tracy remains one of Australia's most devastating natural disasters.

Still, it also stands as a testament to the Darwin community's resilience and the nation's unity during times of crisis. Fifty years on, the memories of that fateful Christmas still resonate deeply with survivors like Christine Ross, who lived to tell the tale.



Christine Ross was in Darwin the night Cyclone Tracy destroyed the city.

## Indigenous artists to shine at Tamworth

By ASAD KHAN



THE Toyota Country Music Festival in Tamworth, Australia's largest and longest-running country music festival, is set to return from January 17-26, 2025.

This iconic 10-day event, which transforms the city into a musical haven, will feature both free and ticketed performances across a variety of venues, including pubs, stages, and even the streets of Tamworth.

Ngaarda Media senior broadcaster Gerry Terrati, also known as the G-Man, is a long-time participant in the Tamworth Country Music Festival.

He shared his perspective on how Indigenous representation at the event has evolved over the years, reflecting on the early challenges faced by Indigenous broadcasters.

"In the beginning, we'd have to go to the festival and broadcast from the back of a room or even a bank. There was no real space for us," Mr Terrati said.

"It was a struggle, but over time, we



Ngaarda Media senior broadcaster Gerry Terrati, also known as the G-Man.

built partnerships, and our reputation as a professional media outlet grew.

"We weren't just attending to broadcast for one hour a day anymore, instead, we became integral to the

festival experience."

Mr Terrati said that the festival's growth mirrors the increasing visibility of Indigenous artists and performers.

"When I first started going, it was hard to find an Indigenous person, apart from Troy Cassar-Daley, of course, and old man Uncle Jimmy Little, or the Knox Brothers," he explained.

"But now, it's different. You can see more Indigenous buskers and performers, and it's changing the face of the festival for good."

The involvement of Indigenous broadcasters at Tamworth is more than just a representation of culture – it is an opportunity to gain valuable media experience and showcase diverse talent to a wider audience.

"The experience of going to Tamworth changes you for the rest of your life," Mr Terrati said.

"It gives you skills and experience in

media that you wouldn't get elsewhere," he said.

"For many, the festival represents a significant opportunity to experience the best of country music, but for others, it is also a chance to break barriers and showcase underrepresented voices in the industry."

This year, Ngaarda Media is taking a unique step by bringing Aboriginal cadets from across Australia to the festival.

The initiative aims to impart broadcasting skills to the cadets, providing them with opportunities regardless of their postcode.

As the festival continues to grow, so does the role of Aboriginal voices within the country music scene.

The 2024 Tamworth Country Music Festival promises to be another step forward in celebrating a vibrant cultural shift and providing opportunities for future generations.

These articles were reproduced with permission from Ngaarda Media. Ngaarda Media was created by the Yindjibarndi community for all Aboriginal people of the Pilbara region. They are the only licensed Aboriginal broadcaster in the 500,000-square-kilometre region and the collective voice of more than 30 language groups of Traditional Owners.



## Continuing the push towards reconciliation

The National Reconciliation Week (NRW) 2025 theme, Bridging Now to Next, reflects the ongoing connection between past, present and future.

Bridging Now to Next urges us to look ahead and continue the push forward as past lessons guide us.

It reflects the fact that our modern history has seen unrelenting efforts by First Nations and non-Indigenous allies to achieve reconciliation, self-determination and justice.

At a time when Australia faces uncertainty in its reconciliation journey, this theme calls on all Australians to step forward together.

In the #NRW2025 theme artwork created by Kalkadoon woman Bree Buttershaw, native plants – known for regenerating after fire and thriving through adversity – symbolise our collective strength and the possibilities of renewal. This is a time for growth, reflection, and commitment to walking together.

The theme shows Australia's history of reconciliation is not a linear one but one that includes both great strides and disappointing setbacks.

Twenty-five years ago, Corroboree 2000

brought together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous leaders in a historic call for reconciliation.

Corroboree 2000 and the Sydney Harbour Bridge walk were significant events in our long journey and our determination to continue that journey towards a reconciled Australia and justice for First Nations peoples is unstoppable.

We invite all Australians to join us during NRW 2025 27 May – 3 June.

The #NRW2025 theme was created in collaboration with Little Rocket, a First Nations owned and operated marketing and creative agency.

See information on #NRW2025 on the Reconciliation Australia website.

More assets, activity, and information will be released in February 2025.

National Reconciliation Week – 27 May to 3 June every year – is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements, and to recommit ourselves to reconciliation and the fight for First Nations justice in Australia.

NRW 2025 posters and assets will be

released in February 2025. Keep updated on [reconciliation.org.au](https://reconciliation.org.au)



**Karen Mundine**  
Chief executive  
Reconciliation Australia

## Have a chat with Katie Kiss

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Katie Kiss is visiting Coffs Harbour for her Informing the Agenda project.

**When:** Tuesday 21 January, 11:30am-3:00pm

**Where:** CHLALC - Cr Pacific Highway & Arthur St, Coffs Harbour

The project seeks to collate and communicate the perspectives of First Nations Peoples across Australia on the key issues affecting their lives, and to ensure First Nations voices are elevated in national conversations relevant to the fulfillment of their human rights.

This event provides an opportunity to Inform the Agenda of the Social Justice Commissioner, and to tell us what you think is required for a fair and just future for First Nations.

We encourage everyone to help spread the word and invite all members of the community to join us in this important discussion. Your participation will contribute to shaping a meaningful dialogue.

Scan the QR code to register for the Coffs Harbour ITA event!

If you would like to speak to someone about this event (including help to register) or the ITA project you can call (02) 9284 9615 or email [informingtheagenda@humanrights.gov.au](mailto:informingtheagenda@humanrights.gov.au)



The Koori Mail welcomes your Letters to the Editor. Preference will be given to submissions of interest to Indigenous Australians. Please include your town and State of residence, and daytime telephone number for checking purposes. Items may be edited and reproduced.



**Mail**

The Editor, PO Box 117,  
Lismore, 2480



**Phone**

You can reach us  
on 02 66 222 666



**E-mail**

The address is:  
[editor@koorimail.com](mailto:editor@koorimail.com)

## KEEPING YOUR SAY SHORT AND SWEET

A BIG thanks to all of our readers for sending letters, poems and other feedback; we love hearing from you.

You can help us by keeping your letters to 400 words or less and poems generally no more than 25 medium-length lines. This will increase your chances of being published.

Even if sent via email, all letters and poems must be accompanied by the author's full name, home town/city and state/territory, and a contact number so we can verify content. After that, we're happy to withhold names and addresses upon request. We will publish 'Looking For' letters as long as they do not breach

the privacy of individuals mentioned.

And we're happy to consider photos alongside letters – as long as they're of a high enough resolution and standard, and as long as copyright requirements are met. We accept no responsibility for returning original photos, so please send copies instead. – **EDITOR**



# LA, the burning city

As we slowly and reluctantly pull ourselves into 2025, the first week of January is showing us that this is not gonna be an easy year.

Faced with continual big global issues such as the many genocides taking place around the world, the AI advancement putting jobs and businesses into redundancy, and now the sci-fi apocalypse movie we all watched growing up is now our reality as LA is on fire.

In the first week of January, Los Angeles, one of the largest metropolitan cities in the world, was hit by devastating wildfires that were aggravated by powerful Santa Ana winds.

2025 has kicked off with a deep reminder of how disconnected our colonial capitalist societies are, and how the way we are living does not work with the needs of the planet. We are reminded that climate disasters don't care whether you believe in the climate crisis or not, it will ultimately only take time for it to change from you being the viewer on your socials of another community's disaster, to when you yourself are filming or photographing that disaster. No amount of money, fame or status can save you from fire, floods or earthquakes. Ultimately all your material possessions will be burnt or washed away.

This week's headlines are highlighting how the climate crisis is getting worse, AI is ramping up and more and more people are dying in Africa as 'we' (the west) scramble to find cobalt to put into our batteries that will be the fuel for the renewable revolution.

What is actually going on? Are



**Ella Noah Bancroft**

we so far gone that we can't see – that this whole society and system needs to be destroyed and rebuilt. We cannot put a bandaid on an arm that has been cut off.

We just can't keep living under these systems and structures of deep oppression and extraction of our planet and the beings that inhabit it.

We have to stop the trade systems, the flying of goods all over the world, the flying of humans, private jets, driving, burning up energy and precious finite resources as we continue to push ahead in this society.

There is something ominous about the LA fires, it feels like so many end-of-the-world movies that I watched as a kid, it's also the epicentre of Hollywood and

the propaganda culture machine that shapes the minds of Americans, Australians and other "Western" societies that idealise the US and its capitalist culture.

Los Angeles Aqueduct was a triumph of human ingenuity and engineering. Workmen praised "the men who diverted streams into ditches and fed waving fields of grain, vineyards, glossy orange groves and rich gardens that blossomed where once desert brooded" but with every action there is a reaction and when our society continues to manipulate the waters, build on flood plains, create huge cities with populations too large for the land to hold, we are going against the lore of land.

We are taking too much and asking too much of one condensed land mass.

As the wildfires rage, I can't help but think that we need to change the culture of admiring famous people, actors, directors and those who make up Hollywood, for what they have shown us in the past five years in the media is that it is an insidious industry full of misogyny and sexual assault, the misuse of power and the continuation of values and beliefs that are somehow built around colonial and capitalist ideals of success.

The brainwashing epicentre of the world is on fire and while I pray for the people who are there, perhaps this will be a moment to reflect on what could be rebuilt here.

Thousands of buildings have been destroyed, almost 180,000 residents were asked to evacuate, and people are asking why this is happening in the dead of winter.

As we see the rise of AI and

the culture of convenience continue to grow and try to maintain its status, we will see the planet start to rebel.

Start to act back, you can only take so much from a living being without returning anything before she starts getting angry.

The online conversations have fuelled information about how ChatGPT and other forms of artificial intelligence are going to create more climate disasters and accelerate our ultimate doom.

One search on ChatGPT uses 10x the amount of energy as a Google search.

Training one AI model produces the same amount of carbon dioxide as 300 round-trip flights between New York and San Francisco and five times the lifetime emissions of a car.

Everything is connected. I am not saying that ChatGPT started the fire but I will say if we continue down the path of convenience, we will destroy ourselves and the planet we live on.

ChatGPT also says that it understands that there are concerns about the impact of AI because they are valid and even ChatGPT says that it's true that training and running large AI models can have a significant carbon footprint particularly during development.

ChatGPT then goes on to say that companies are actively working to reduce the impact by investing in renewables but renewables are also using finite resources.

So we're stuck on this hamster wheel, pretending we are moving into a new direction but we are just running the same old circuit.

What's the answer? I don't

know but I feel instinctively it will require us to slow down, move less, return to more local based community connection, get reconnected to our food systems, relearn the plants and animals that live around us and get our eyes off the screens in exchange for looking into the eyes of another being.

We are not going to solve the issues of the world with a few wind devices and solar panels. There is something much bigger at play here.

So 2025, the start of the year, is a time to reflect on choices I can make in this year. Do I want to contribute to child slave labour and the destruction of our oceans by buying fast fashion? Do I want to keep pouring my money into companies and corporations who damage our only Mother Earth? Do I want to continue to put actors and people with status on a pedestal or will I remember my mother is my greatest hero? Will I remember the free joy that is given when I swim in the ocean or rivers, or lay on the floor of the forest?

These wildfires might bring about the destruction of celebrity culture, the ending of a dominant capitalist culture and maybe it will make way for new shoots to come through, new life, new values and beliefs, seeds that haven't been cracked open will burst into birth.

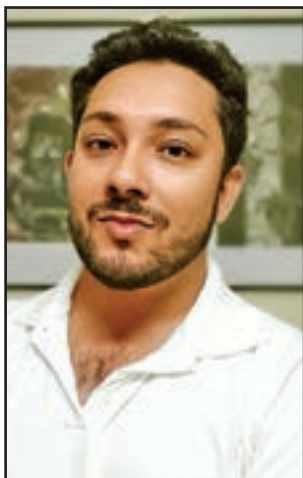
We must destroy this system that is destroying our planet for profit, or we will live in a slow decline slowly walking towards the apocalypse.

● Ella Noah Bancroft is a Bundjalung woman and a regular contributor to the Koori Mail.

# Blak media: the golden hill for writers

Not just Australia's oldest First Nations-owned print media outlet, but a bastion of blak excellence in the media and journalism, the *Koori Mail* stands as an example to our peoples. And yet, besides *National Indigenous Times* or *First Nations Telegraph*, on a national or even state or regional level of scope and readership, it remains a solitary figure. Blak media en masse, and with participation, is the Golden Hill any writer or aspiring journalist would pilgrimage to – we need more of it! Radio is also a huge frontier our peoples have taken in stride for many decades, and remains one of our most egalitarian spaces for connectivity.

When I was a wee lad, growing up in Weipa (Cape York Peninsula, Queensland), me and a friend named Carl Jackson, who is a politically-active disrupter, as well as being academically and musically gifted, would write these very short stories. Carl was



**Jack Wilkie-Jans**

a talented sketch artist as well, and he created the art for when we put these to paper. We didn't know anything about binding, and so our 'story books' were essentially pamphlets and rather rudimentary in theme and production – but an achievement nonetheless for two kids all of 10 at our

oldest. From memory, our readership was just ourselves. While I hadn't learned a thing about writing at that point than to spell, and certainly nothing about politics or the arts even, I had learned to read and to enjoy stories.

I yearned to be around storytellers (my Old People) and, being English, I always had the Harry Potter books before anybody. At the root of all my pursuits, words have been central. Even in art-making (films or works of canvas) I draw inspiration from worded stories and the written word, in particular. I'm not so much drawn to the visceral or tangible or literal, even when making something physical like a painting; nor even when painting a "landscape". I was destined to be a writer and above anything – good or bad – I'd wish anybody to remember me as a writer. And, I write all kinds of things and to all manner of briefs and techniques. Only, no books (yet) and very rarely anything purely creative in narrative. In

other work (across consulting on corporate and engagement policy, strategic planning, literature reviews, project mapping, and marketing), it's all essentially telling stories, or telling stories of storytellers/doers/of anything. Communicating things of importance or of fancy, disseminating information, drawing in peoples via information, keeping the fire burning... It's all part and parcel to our survival as First Nations peoples, for eons.

So, when I was in my thirties, a dream came true! I had been approached to not only write often or dedicatedly for a season (such as I had previously for SBS Australia and *ArtHub*) or on long-form texts following projects (like essays, discussion papers or arts catalogue research), but as a columnist for *Koori Mail*. Being a columnist for a national paper is a different thing; it's more visible.

When I got the call from the newspaper in 2022, I

was on the road from Gimuy (Cairns) to Garramilla (Darwin) for the Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair; it was a moment testament to years of writing ad-hoc. Years of never knowing if I was making an impact, or, if anybody was even paying attention—beyond the editors who have taught me. More than this, it was an opportunity to dedicate time each fortnight to writing strictly about and to our peoples, for the oldest blak-owned media in Australia.

So, to begin this 2025, I want to reflect on how meaningful this work is, and how valuable the many stories which come my way (and the *Koori Mail*'s) are – as well as those which don't reach us. I want to start this year thanking you all who trust us to come to us, thanking *Koori Mail* and all blak leaders in the media and those coming up in journalism, for the platforms and for having the ear and advocacy of our peoples.

Furthermore, I want to impress on the importance of supporting blak media,

and media and writers/journalists who write informed on our issues. Of course, the best way to support is to subscribe to online and print issues, but also to keep us in mind when sending your stories or when contemplating if there's an audience to what you're doing and experiencing. Because, we are here and standing to attention! Blak media is at the forefront of our common record-keeping for future generations to re-read and learn from, to see in the here and now, and to know they too can become involved. Like the arts, media and journalism needs up-and-comers to move into and over to this space – to keep the fire burning of ethical and accurate discourse of our contemporary trials and tribulations, our joy and hills yet to climb.

● Jack Wilkie-Jans is a Waanji, Teppathiggi and Tjungundji artist and writer, and a regular contributor to the Koori Mail.



# Sharing and celebrating First Nations-led wellbeing programs



**Prof Pat Dudgeon**

One of the most worthwhile things we do in our work is to share examples of excellent community-led practice from all over Australia that promotes social and emotional wellbeing and approaches to preventing suicide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Through the initiatives featured in the CBPATSISP Clearing House for Best Practice Programs and Services, we show-case strength, resilience and innovation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. These activities clearly demonstrate that First Nations people have the knowledge, ideas and capacity to lead positive projects of all kinds and at all scales for the benefit of our people and communities.

They include well-resourced national programs like Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Aid, which teaches participants – both First Nations and non-Indigenous – how to provide strengths-based initial support to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander adult experiencing a crisis, and encourage the person to seek further cultural or professional supports.

They also include local activities that respond to local needs, led by Elders with few or no financial resources. The Women's Yarning Circle on Butchulla Country in Queensland, is one example. It began with a group of four women who came to the Wide Bay Women's Health Centre for a rock-painting workshop that introduced cultural symbols, facilitated by a local Butchulla artist. It continues with a strong emphasis on local Butchulla culture, arts, and crafts, and on inclusive reciprocal sharing of culture and friendship with local women of all ages, backgrounds and nationalities.

The Clearing House shares programs based on established Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander methodologies for promoting social and emotional wellbeing, like walking on Country camps that reconnect First Nations people – especially youth – to their land and culture. The Karla Niyaparli Aboriginal Corporation (KNAC), which represents the Niyaparli people in the East Pilbara region in



**Participants in the Yawardani Jan-ga Equine Assisted Learning program in the Kimberley, which supports social and emotional wellbeing through interaction with horses. Picture: Yawardani Jan-ga**

Western Australia, is one of many examples. It hosts Kids On Country Junior Rangers Camp, strengthening cultural learning and wellbeing, and inspiring future careers in conservation and land management through activities like fish surveying, monitoring invasive species and collecting bush plants.

We also include programs based on newer and more experimental thinking, like Yawardani Jan-ga, which means Horses Helping in Yawuru language. Based in the Kimberley region in Western Australia it supports Aboriginal young people aged 6 to 26 through equine-assisted learning, which takes a strengths-based, person-centred approach to enhancing social and emotional wellbeing through involvement in activities such as grooming, leading, haltering and safe and structured interactions with horses. Yawardani Jan-ga is developing a strong body of evidence for the effectiveness of the program so it can be replicated in other communities.

One of the most novel programs in the Clearing House is Deadly Hair Dude in the Northern Territory, which trains First Nations people from remote and regional areas how to cut, colour and style hair – focusing on trainees as individuals and community members and guiding them in the early stages of a trade that can be a source of self-respect, pride and identity.

We have well-defined best practice criteria for inclusion in the Clearing House, based on principles identified through the 2016 Aboriginal and Torres Strait



**Niyaparli school students from the East Pilbara region learn about culture and management of Country through the Kids On Country Junior Rangers Camp. Picture: Karla Niyaparli Aboriginal Corporation (KNAC).**

Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project (ATSISPEP):

- **First Nations Ownership:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were involved in the development, implementation and governance of the program or service, and led the operations and delivery of the program.

- **Evidenced by an First Nations-led steering committee or advisory group.**

- **Community Leadership:** The program or service is working within or with the local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, and/or has relationships or integrates with other First Nations community organisations, programs or services.

- **Evidenced by formal partnerships or collaborations.**

- **Community Consultation and Co-design:** An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community reference group was established for the program or

service and included key stakeholders or members of the target group (e.g. youth, Elders, consumers, carers, LGBTQI+, lived experience) and meetings were held regularly.

- **Evidenced by notes/minutes of meetings.**

- **Evaluation:** Ongoing program or service evaluation is in place to ensure continuous quality improvement, including feedback from participants or community, during delivery or after completion of the program or service.

- **Evidenced by internal review documenting any resulting action plan, including timeline and status update when actioned.**

- **Cultural Responsiveness:** Non-First Nations staff has undertaken cultural responsiveness and safety training.

- **Evidenced by documentation of completion of training.**

- **Capacity Building:** The program builds First Nations community capacity through the training, mentoring and support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to lead and deliver future similar programs or services.

- **Evidenced by plans for training and other capacity building activities.**

Not all programs can comply with each of these points, and because we want to share valuable ideas and approaches across our whole community, we recognise that many initiatives have particular strengths in one or more but not all categories. We offer the criteria as reference for what constitutes best practice and for how communities and organisations can aspire to further develop their programs and services.

As our centre's staff visit communities and attend meetings and conferences we are always learning of new initiatives that in diverse ways empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to enhance their own social and emotional wellbeing and support those around them. We have added consistently to the Clearing House since it began five years ago and we now feature more than 180 programs and services! These initiatives model best practice and provide encouragement and inspiration, demonstrating the formidable knowledge and skill in communities. It is important to acknowledge and celebrate the capacity and innovation that is part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

At the start of 2025 we encourage all *Koori Mail* readers to tell us about what you are doing in your communities to improve social and emotional wellbeing and prevent suicide. We would love to include you in the Clearing House. You can read here about how to Share Your Program, or you are always welcome to give us a call. Wishing a Happy New Year to everyone.

**Professor Pat Dudgeon is Bardi woman from the Kimberley region of Western Australia. She is a psychologist and Director of the Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention (CBPATSISP) at the University of Western Australia.**

**This article is part of a series of Koori Mail columns about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health, social and emotional wellbeing and suicide prevention contributed by authors from the CBPATSISP, which was established in 2017 to develop and share evidence about effective suicide prevention approaches for First Nations people and communities.**



# Gratitude for outgoing directors



Eddie Fry.



INDIGENOUS Business Australia (IBA) will farewell their outgoing board directors, including the chairperson, as they finish their terms this month.

IBA are a progressive, commercially-focused organisation that promotes and encourages self-management, self-sufficiency and economic independence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The outgoing board directors include Eddie Fry (chairperson), Shirley McPherson, Rick Allert, and Rick Callaghan.

Their contributions have been pivotal in shaping the direction of the organisation and empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in achieving economic independence.

Together, their leadership and



Shirley McPherson.

commitment to IBA has also led to the achievements of the business and to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Eddie Fry served as chairperson of the IBA Board since 2014.

A Dagoman man from the Katherine region in the Northern Territory, Mr Fry's leadership has been transformative, not just for IBA, but for Indigenous businesses and communities across Australia.

"The IBA Board and the IBA family have kept striving for excellence in everything we do," Mr Fry said.

Shirley McPherson, a Yamatji-Noongar woman, made significant contributions to Indigenous financial and economic development in her 10-year term at IBA.

Ms McPherson brought with her a dedication and strategic insight to IBA's growth and impact.

"My wish is for our First Nations people



Rick Allert.

to understand that they have an enormous land mass ownership in Australia and therefore must develop it to ensure great returns, but always maintain 'control' of their Country," Ms McPherson said.

"My second wish for our customers is for them to always pursue their dreams, never think that they'll never achieve them – because they will."

## Annual report

IBA's latest annual report noted success in the financial year with distributions of over \$365 million in capital or capability development to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, support for 2,681 people with an IBA product, or the opportunity to access the economy through a job or procurement, and 3,829 people provided with access to networks, knowledge, and capability-building services.



Rick Callaghan.

Over ten years since 2014, IBA has grown its total investment portfolio value from \$198 million to \$576 million, approved \$1.951 billion in home loans and \$456 million in business finance.

Rick Allert AO, has been vital in strengthening IBA's financial sustainability and its capacity to deliver meaningful outcomes for Indigenous Australians in his 10-year term. His governance, expertise, and commitment to transparency have played a key role in IBA's strategic development.

Rick Callaghan, a proud Potaruwutj man, served as a board director since 2021. He said that "Knowing that our strong team has delivered on our charter and increased the gross assets by 71% over the past ten years, and legislation to improve the IBA's commerciality and sustainability is ready as we leave".

## New co-chairs for Reconciliation Australia



RECONCILIATION Australia has welcomed two new co-chairs to its board of directors following the retirement of Professor Tom Calma AO and Ms Melinda Cilento.

The new co-chairs are long-standing director Ms Kirstie Parker and the newly-appointed director, Mr Michael Rose AM.

Ms Parker is a Yuwaalaraay woman from northwest NSW and has been a director of Reconciliation Australia since 2010, Co-Chair of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples and was a previous editor of the *Koori Mail*.

Mr Rose is an experienced director who serves on a number of commercial, government and not for profit boards. He has worked closely with Reconciliation Australia over the years and was a member of the Referendum Council on Constitutional Recognition

Professor Calma and Ms Cilento have led the board since 2011 and the new co-chairs expressed their deep gratitude to Professor Calma and Ms Cilento.

"Both Tom and Melinda have provided inspired and thoughtful leadership and guidance to the organisation for more than a decade," Ms Parker said.

"Their contribution to reconciliation and Australian public life has been immense, and I have no doubt that their passionate advocacy for First Nations justice and reconciliation will continue."

Ms Parker said she was honoured to step into the co-chair role and looked forward to working alongside Michael Rose.

"Whilst as a nation we have stumbled in recent times and lost some ground, I'm eternally buoyed by the dignity, courage and tenacity of First Nations people as well as many non-Indigenous Australians of the same character," she said.

"Enduring reconciliation will be achieved



**New co-chairs of Reconciliation Australia Michael Rose AM and long-standing director Kirstie Parker.**

not through the comments section of tabloid newspapers or on talkback radio airwaves but through the steady advancement of First Nations self-determination underpinned by a groundswell of genuine, thoughtful actions – small and big – by good people with open hearts.

"Through these, we will see the best of this nation."

Mr Rose said "Through their leadership and guidance, Tom and Melinda have positioned Reconciliation Australia well to continue its important work, work that matters now more than ever. I am looking forward to working with Kirstie, our board colleagues and the management team, taking this work forward."

The board also farewellled director Kenny Bedford, a Meuram man from Erub in Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait Islands), who the new co-chairs thanked for his unwavering commitment to reconciliation and generosity in sharing his unique perspectives from remote Australia.

## Housing a priority



ABORIGINAL Housing Northern Territory (AHNT) are excited to announce the recent appointment of Leeanne Caton as their new Chief Executive Officer.

Ms Caton, a Kalkadoon/Waanyi Woman, was born in Queensland and raised and educated on Larrakia Country.

She has nearly 40 years experience working in the Aboriginal Affairs arena across all of the social determinant areas.

Many of those years have been spent working between Darwin, Alice Springs and Perth in the Australian, Western Australian, and Northern Territory governments.

Ms Caton said she is extremely honoured to take on her new role as CEO of AHNT.

"I look forward to working with all stakeholders to achieve positive and sustainable results," she said.

Ms Caton has been ministerially appointed to a number of national and high-level boards and has more than 10 years experience in CEO roles in the Aboriginal community-controlled organisation sector.

She is passionate about social justice and believes that success in life begins with a home.

"I acknowledge and welcome the huge investment by both tiers of government into remote housing and homelands," Ms Caton said.

"The Partnership Agreement for Remote Housing and Homelands came into effect from July 1, 2024 and will expire on June 30, 2034."

"Through this agreement, the parties commit to working towards restoring the



**Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory recently appointed Leeanne Caton as their new Chief Executive Officer.**

principle of self-determination in Aboriginal communities and across the remote housing system – by working together to transform the way governments provide housing and services to Aboriginal communities, town camps and homelands."

Ms Caton said Aboriginal people will be empowered to lead and participate in key decisions affecting the design, delivery, monitoring, and review of the remote housing system.

"Parties to this agreement pledge to collaborate and participate in shared decision-making under this agreement, as fully informed and equal partners, that are accountable, representative, and transparent."





Kakadu Tourism operates the world-famous Mercure Kakadu Crocodile Hotel in Jabiru.

## ANTAR appoints senior leaders to key positions



INDIGENOUS Perspectives has announced the appointment of two of its senior leaders to key board positions at

ANTAR, a leading national advocacy organisation committed to achieving rights, justice and respect for First Nations Peoples in Australia.

Des Rogers, Founder and Managing Director of Indigenous Perspectives, has been appointed President of ANTAR, marking a historic milestone as the first Indigenous President in ANTAR's 27-year history.

Shae Lake, Director of Corporate Services at Indigenous Perspectives, has been appointed Secretary of ANTAR.

ANTAR is a national advocacy organisation that has worked alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, organisations and communities since 1997.

The new appointments mark the first time ANTAR's board has had a majority Indigenous representation, with six out of nine board members identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

The appointment of Mr Rogers and Ms Lake reflect their leadership, expertise and deep commitment to advocating for the rights and advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

A respected Aboriginal Elder from the Pertame clan of Central Australia, Mr Rogers brings more than three decades of leadership experience spanning the social and community services sector and public administration.

He has been an ANTAR board director for the past five years as well as serving on prominent boards, including OXFAM Australia and Murri Watch.

"I am honoured to step into the role of president at ANTAR, an organisation that has been a steadfast ally for First Nations rights for nearly three decades," he said.

Shae Lake is a proud Quandamooka/Wakka Wakka woman with nearly 30 years of experience in program



Des Rogers.



Shae Lake.

management, policy development and strategic planning, specialising in initiatives that empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. She has served as an ANTAR board director since 2017.

"Being appointed as secretary of ANTAR is a privilege and an opportunity to contribute to a powerful movement for justice and reconciliation," she said.

"The historic majority Indigenous representation on the board ensures we are leading the way with the voices of First Nations peoples at the forefront.

National Director of ANTAR, Blake Cansdale, said, "Des Rogers' appointment as the first ever First Nations president, and Shae Lake's as secretary, mark a significant and historic step for ANTAR."

"With a majority First Nations board now leading ANTAR, we are better positioned than ever to amplify First Nations voices and deliver meaningful outcomes.

## Lauren takes top job at Kakadu Tourism



PROUD First Nations woman Lauren Ganley has been appointed as Chair of Kakadu Tourism, following the resignation of Rick Allert AO after a decade in the role.

Based in Darwin, Ms Ganley has served on the board of Kakadu Tourism since 2012 and brings with her decades of experience working to advance Indigenous engagement.

As the Head of Telstra's First Nations Strategy & Engagement, Ms Ganley leads the strategy and ongoing governance of engagement with First Nations people and communities across Australia.

Her extensive involvement in the NT community includes director roles on the boards of Community First Development, Agency Projects, Darwin Festival, NT Major Events, and the Australian Institute of Company Directors (NT Division).

Ms Ganley said she is excited about future opportunities for Kakadu's tourism development.

"It has been very rewarding to have worked on the board and with Rick for so many years, and I look forward to building on that legacy as Kakadu continues to rebuild its tourism sector after the substantial challenges of the pandemic and reduced air access



Lauren Ganley has been appointed as Chair of Kakadu Tourism in the Northern Territory.

into the Northern Territory," she said.

"The role of Kakadu Tourism is focussed on providing an authentic visitor experience and working collaboratively with Bininj/Munggyu to achieve an economically, environmentally, and culturally sustainable future for the park."

Mr Allert ends his tenure with Kakadu Tourism at the same time as he finishes as a director on the Board of Indigenous Business Australia (IBA). He is also on the Board of Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia and is a former Chair of Tourism Australia.

Kakadu Tourism is a pioneering organisation established with Kakadu National Park's Traditional Owners to provide a comprehensive range of accommodation and tourism services across Kakadu.

Kakadu Tourism operates the world-famous Mercure Kakadu Crocodile Hotel in Jabiru, Cooina Lodge and Camping Ground, Yellow Water Cruises, Yellow Water Fishing, and Spirit of Kakadu 4WD Adventures operating from Cooina.

The group is committed to advancing opportunities for the Bininj/Munggyu people of Kakadu and promoting Aboriginal culture and heritage through the operation of the Warradjan Cultural Centre.

"There is considerable work being undertaken to upgrade the tourism infrastructure of Kakadu National Park, and we have invested in upgrading our tourism product and working with Traditional Owners to provide a memorable connection with Aboriginal culture and traditions," Ms Ganley said.

"With the prospect of enhanced air access into Darwin, we will be hoping to rebuild our international markets, as well as attract more Australians to visit this unique dual-listed UNESCO World Heritage reserve that has been inhabited continuously for more than 60,000 years."

## New councillor appointed in Yugul Mangi Ward



Melissa Andrews-Wurramarrba.



ROPER Gulf Regional Council recently announced Melissa Andrews-Wurramarrba as the newly appointed representative (councillor) for the Yugul Mangi Ward.

The nomination process concluded last year on December 2, with the appointment officially resolved during the recent ordinary meeting held in Katherine on December 4.

Mayor Tony Jack welcomed the new councillor, emphasising the importance of strong community representation.

"Having Melissa Andrews-Wurramarrba join our team is a great step forward for the Yugul Mangi Ward and the broader region," Mayor Jack said.

"Her enthusiasm and commitment to her community will help ensure we continue to deliver for the people we serve."

Tony Jack was elected as

mayor of Roper Gulf Regional Council in the 2021 elections. Mayor Jack is from Robinson River (Borroloola) and represents the South West Gulf Ward.

"With Melissa Andrews-Wurramarrba now part of council, the Roper Gulf Regional Council continues its focus on improving services, supporting local initiatives, and fostering community development throughout the region," Mayor Jack said.



Mayor Tony Jack.



# Sharona's Wise One is new branding for CDU



CHARLES Darwin University (CDU) has adopted new First Nations branding, with Aboriginal artist and CDU Bachelor of Primary Education student Sharona Dardoongarly Bishop winning the university's design competition for her work 'Wise One.'

Incorporating the symbolism and vibrant imagery of the Ngarinman people of the Northern Territory, the artwork will be a centrepiece in CDUs visual identity – featuring across the First Nations Student Support Guide and student site 'Campfire' as well as across the university's First Nations apparel and wider student, staff and alumni network.

Ms Bishop said she was

"stoked" at the opportunity to share her artwork with the wider community.

"I'm from a small homeland called Bob's Yard in Jubbarr (Gregory National Park) and my Dreamtime stories come from my grandparents who have sadly passed on," she said.

"The symbols on my artworks, the patterns and colours, they represent the history of my people – of Australia.

"When people see my artwork I want them to feel and know that it doesn't matter who they are or where they come from, they have a rich shared culture as an Australian and that's something to be proud of."

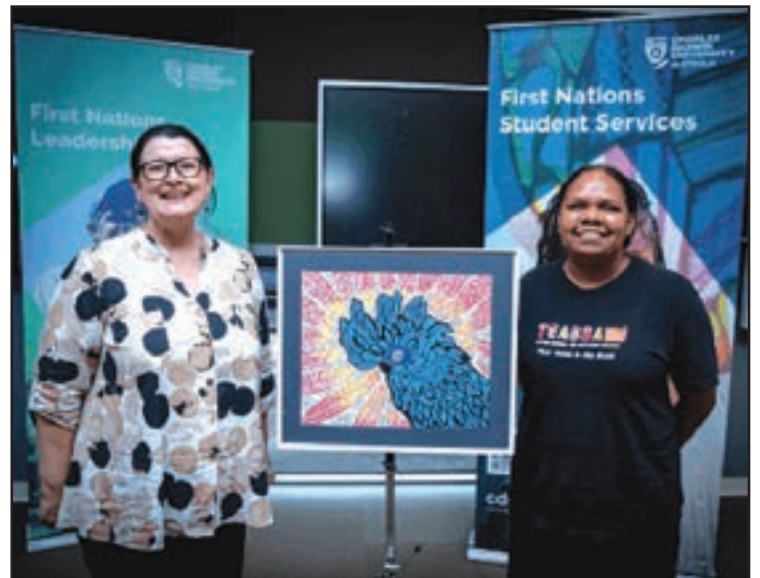
Voted unanimously by a panel of judges that included CDU Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Scott

Bowman AO and Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership, Professor Reuben Bolt, Professor Bowman said the complexity of the work was a considerable drawcard in its selection.

"We had 'Wise One' up on a computer and at first you think it's a cockatoo but the closer you delve into it there's more and more pictures," he said.

"The image itself is great, but there are designs in here that can be used. again and again – just one of the feathers is a work of art, it's incredible.

"The project underscores CDUs commitment to honouring First Nations culture and supporting First Nations voices, and to know that we have got such incredible talent amongst our student group is just wonderful."



Sharona Dardoongarly Bishop (right) with her winning artwork *Wise One* pictured alongside friend and mentor, CDU Faculty of Education lecturer, Joanne Forrest.

# First Nations finance and business scholarship open for applications



"This program is an investment in the future of our people and our communities."

Scholarship Patron Leah Armstrong



A GROUNDBREAKING scholarship program that supports First Nations women pursuing higher education in finance and business is open for another round of applications in 2025.

First Nations Economics, in partnership with First Nations Foundation, has launched a new round of the Leah Armstrong Scholarship program following a successful inaugural year in 2024.

The scholarship, named in honour of trailblazing Torres Strait Islander woman and chair of First Australians Capital, Leah Armstrong, grants scholarships of up to \$20,000 per year for up to three years to First Nations women pursuing full-time tertiary studies at an Australian tertiary education provider.

First Nations Economics Managing Director Associate Professor Rick Macourt said the scholarship's commitment is to drive sustainable transformation.

"Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to excel in critical fields like finance, governance, and economics is essential for community-driven solutions, he said.

"Our inaugural year demonstrated the incredible potential of these scholars to lead transformative change that benefits not just themselves, but their entire communities. As an organisation, we are proud to invest in the self-determination of First Nations women."

First Nations Foundation chief executive Phil Usher said education is key to self-determination.

"By equipping First Nations women with the tools to lead, we empower communities to take control of their futures.

"The Leah Armstrong Scholarship is about creating long-term economic and social value for First Nations people."

An inaugural recipient of the Leah Armstrong Scholarship, Desire Kilduff, said the scholarship had been life changing and encouraged all eligible First Nations women to apply.

"It has allowed me to focus on my studies and pursue my dreams without financial burden," she said.

Scholarship Patron Leah Armstrong emphasised the importance of the scholarship program in removing barriers for First Nations women in their pursuit of higher education.

"This program is an investment in the future of our people and our communities."

Applications for the Leah Armstrong Scholarship are now open to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women studying or intending to study at an Australian university or tertiary education institution.

The program welcomes applicants from various disciplines, including economics, finance, business, and community governance.

To learn more about the application process, go to:

[www.firstnationaleconomics.com](http://www.firstnationaleconomics.com)

Applications close on January 31, 2025.



## Nursing and midwifery scholarships and cadetships



ABORIGINAL nursing and midwifery university students can access financial and career support, with applications now open for the NSW Health Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship and Cadetship Program.

NSW Health developed the program to increase the number of Aboriginal nurses and midwives working in the public health system, and to improve career opportunities.

Scholarships include:

- NSW Health Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Undergraduate Scholarships of up to \$1,000 per subject for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students undertaking a Bachelor of Nursing or Bachelor of Midwifery.

- NSW Health Aboriginal Enrolled Nurse to Registered Nurse Scholarships of up to \$15,000 per year for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students employed as an Enrolled Nurse in a NSW Health facility and undertaking a Bachelor of Nursing.

Cadetships include:

- a study allowance of \$600 per fortnight while studying for 40 weeks
- \$500 per semester support allowance
- 12 weeks paid employment in a local public hospital or Justice Health facility
- support from an Aboriginal mentor, cadet coordinator and additional clinical support

Wiradjuri man and Hunter New England Local Health District Aboriginal Health Operations Manager, Martin Roberts said the cadetship program exceeded his expectations.

"The program provided invaluable support throughout my nursing degree. It gave me opportunities to explore different areas of nursing, offered financial relief, and allowed me to focus on my studies and placements," he said.

"It's been a challenging yet rewarding journey, and the cadetship nurtured my passion for continuous learning and getting in and having a go.

"I'm grateful to have been part of this program and would encourage all Aboriginal students to consider applying."

Minister for Health Ryan Park said the program was a great opportunity for aspiring Aboriginal nurses and midwives to pursue their dream career, give back to their local community, and help improve Aboriginal health outcomes.

"Recipients are offered financial support, work placements and mentoring exposing them to the diverse range of nursing and midwifery careers available across NSW," he said.

To apply for the Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship and Cadetship Program visit the NSW Health website.



Director of VU's Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit Karen Jackson.

## Action plan to privilege First Nations culture



A NEW First Nations action plan aimed at attracting and retaining more Indigenous students has been launched by Victoria University (VU).

The plan advocates privileging First Nations Peoples cultural practices and guidance to the University from Elders and Knowledge Holders on learning, teaching, research, and community.

Yorta Yorta woman, Karen Jackson, Director of VU's Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit, led the development of the plan, which was done in consultation with First Nations students and staff at VU.

"The First Nations Action Plan is a crucial step in acknowledging the need for positive and progressive change, and working together with commitment, connection and courage. The plan will drive positive outcomes for the lives of

First Nations students and staff," Ms Jackson said.

"We are asking non-First Nations students and staff to listen deeply, do the heavy-lifting and seek out the many available tools that are required to meet these challenges."

The First Nations Action Plan is a whole-of-university undertaking, with actions across five key areas, including:

- Achieving steady, incremental year-on-year growth of First Nations students and colleagues at VU

- Ensuring that the retention and success rates of First Nations students match or surpass non-First Nations students

- Upgrading and expanding the existing Aboriginal History Archive (AHA) to enhance its global impact, influence and accessibility

- Extending First Nations-led research; increase student pathways to doctoral degrees and post-doctoral

employment; create national and international research collaborations

- Fostering deep connections and relationships with First Nations partners, organisations and communities

According to VU figures more than 350 First Nations students study at VU with the University having the highest success rate for its First Nation students in the country at 87.1 per cent, with TAFE students experiencing an 86.2 per cent success rate.

VU Bachelor of Biomedicine student Tahnee Towers is a First Nations student who credits both Moondani Balluk and the VU Block Model to her ongoing success.

"It has been an amazing resource and culturally safe space. It's a place where connection with other strong, deadly Mob is possible. It is a place where visionary leaders have shaped historic change. It is incredibly inspiring to stand among these giants," she said.

## Google supports Aboriginal PhD in closing the gap



AUSTRALIAN research aimed at closing the gap in First Nations health outcomes through new and emerging technologies like AI has received the backing of Google.

One of only six recipients of the 2024 Google PhD Fellowship in Australia, Charles Darwin University PhD student and Bundjalung man Luke Hamlin will receive \$15,000 and professional mentorship from Google to explore the application of culturally informed, technology-driven solutions to achieve greater health equity in rural and remote First Nations communities. Tasked with

supporting the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine as part the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group, Luke said the use of mRNA vaccines and Telehealth services during the pandemic was the "game changer" that inspired his PhD.

### Pandemic

"The pandemic showed us just how agile we can be – we can overcome challenges in a crisis, do things differently, and, in many cases, better than we have done before," he explained.

"Increasing STEM literacy and empowering First Nations communities to make informed choices about their health, and on

their terms, is going to go a long way to boosting engagement with new and emerging technologies so that the health gap doesn't widen, and our people don't fall further behind."

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the burden of disease for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is 2.3 times higher than non-Indigenous Australians. That burden increases further for First Nations people living in remote areas, with lower life expectancy compared to those in non-remote areas.

With recent studies identifying a lack of research on the adoption of new and emerging technologies in

rural and remote First Nations communities, CDU Associate Dean Learning and Teaching, and the projects primary PhD supervisor, Bharanidharan Shanmugum, said the pandemic had served to highlight the knowledge gap even further.

"Luke's research aims to empower First Nations communities to make informed decisions about their health by understanding their specific needs and preferences regarding technology adoption," he said.

"By filling this knowledge gap, we can support First Nations communities in leveraging technology to improve their health outcomes and well-being."



Bundjalung man Luke Hamlin.



# Some tips to survive the holiday season



## Kirk Page

The holiday season is a unique blend of joy, nostalgia and, for some, stress. While it's a time to create cherished memories with loved ones, it can also bring challenges and emotions to the surface. Here are some thoughts to keep in mind as we all navigate through this silly season.

Creating positive memories with family without spending a lot of cash.

Organise simple outings with family and friends. Local parks, gardens and nature walks provide a beautiful backdrop for creating memories without breaking the bank.

Enjoy quality time together, it's the small things that count. Sometimes the greatest joy comes from low-key moments spent together. Consider hosting a game night or a potluck dinner where everyone can contribute their favourite dish. Make sure the kids do the dishes, it's the least they can do.

Take it slow and remember it's vital to manage expectations and stress levels. The hustle and bustle can lead to burnout and or exhaustion, resentment creeps in when we don't create realistic boundaries. It's important to pace yourself and prioritise self-care. Remember, it's perfectly okay to say no to certain events or responsibilities.

Reflect and breathe. Moments of quiet and reflection can ground us. When faced with stress, take a few deep breaths and remind yourself that holiday challenges are temporary. Don't be afraid to leave the room and just disappear for 30 mins, take the dog for a walk and put Netflix on for the kids. They'll love a bit of time without the old people telling how to do everything.

Embrace nature it's the best medicine, I am a personal fan of the bike ride, walk then swim, preferably salty water. Spend time outside, soaking in the sun and fresh air. Nature can be incredibly healing, and you may find peace in a simple stroll by the water.

Navigating family dynamics and setting realistic boundaries. Family gatherings can sometimes trigger past wounds. Be thoughtful about your needs and establish boundaries that protect your well-being.

Remember you can use your words and communicate openly, if that's possible. I know it's incredibly challenging to express yourself sometimes with certain family members or friends. Courageously express your feelings and needs. Healthy communication can make a significant difference in fostering understanding among family members.

Staying grounded in confronting times. If conflicts

arise, take a step back before reacting. A moment of pause can help you respond more thoughtfully.

I had to negotiate with neighbours of a family member in the new year. People, drugs are bad and not a great xmas present. Try not to lose your patience.

Honouring loved ones, create a memory shrine. For those navigating grief, consider making a small shrine to honour loved ones who have passed. This can be a beautiful way to celebrate their memory and bring a sense of closure.

Stay hydrated and active. Amid the festivities, don't forget the basics – drink plenty of water and incorporate some form of physical activity into your routine. This can help keep your energy levels up.

The holiday season is what you make of it. With a little planning, self-care and open communication, it can transform from a daunting obligation into a time of warmth and connection. Embrace the moments that matter, and remember that it's okay to prioritise your own well-being.

The holidays can be an opportunity for us to create memories with loved ones.

During the holidays perhaps make a plan regarding what activities you want to do – visiting local parks and gardens, pop in to see friends and family. Look for simple and

cheap ways to make time together. Playing mums and dads isn't always filled with joy and laughs.

The idea of coming together with family and celebrating Xmas for some may be a daunting time.

Tips for surviving the holiday season: take it slow and make sure you are mindful of burnout and exhaustion, it's ok to say no. Breathe and remember that this too shall pass.

Find a way to get out into the fresh air and get some sunshine and water on your skin, find some time to do something that is just for you.

Fitting everyone in can be a daunting task – take it day by day and drink water. If you're lucky enough to be near the ocean or waterways go out and explore. I collected many interesting objects on my walks this season. Make a shrine to honour loved ones who are no longer with us, remember them in moments of quiet.

Some of us can be highly triggered by going home and being with family at the end of the year. Find a way to create boundaries and be open and courageous about asking for what you need, breathe and think twice before reacting to situations that may make you feel uncomfortable.

I hope that this year brings all the good stuff that we all deserve, happy new year and blessings to your families.

A multi-skilled master of none Kirk Page's kinship connections to his Munanjali/Yugembeh, Badu Island (Zenidh Kes), Polish and German ancestry are an inspiration. Growing up on the unceded lands of the Turrbal/Yuggera people in South East Queensland, he left in pursuit of the arts over science and lives to question this fateful moment from 30 years ago.

With a career in the arts sector as a performer across dance, theatre and circus, Kirk is a part-time body for hire, with a vast knowledge of the theatre industry and the fickle state of the arts.

Kirk is a submerging artist touching the edges of irrelevance and partially making peace with the concept of time over knowledge.

He is currently residing in the lush Bundjalung territories of the Northern Rivers and has agreed to contribute his thoughts on books, movies, stories and experiences as our new, regular columnist with the *Koori Mail*.

## Celebrate Queer and First Nations stories

Australia's iconic Abbotsford Convent in Melbourne has presented its Midsumma 2025 program, featuring a ground-breaking line-up of artists sharing work that champions creativity, inclusivity, identity, and community. From powerful dance performances and immersive exhibitions to genre-defying live films and intimate storytelling, Abbotsford Convent highlights include:

**CODED: A Night of Queer Storytelling**  
23 – 25 January

Amelia Jean O'Leary's latest dance creation, CODED, offers an intimate and powerful exploration of First Nations femme queer identities, exploring themes of personified queerness within landscape and culture. Featuring three dynamic new works, CODED brings together a talented ensemble of dancers, including Emily Earther, Carmen Yih, Wendy Feng, and O'Leary herself.

CODED, underpinned by Amelia's haunting score, draws one Amelia's cultural heritage as a Gamilaraay woman to craft a visually arresting and thought-provoking experience, challenging ideas of belonging and identity in a world where queerness is often marked as other.

### QRAVE

The Performance: 29 January – 1 February

Exhibition: 29 January – 8 February

QRAVE is a deeply personal and politically-charged exhibition and performance by Jessi Ryan, a queer artist, journalist and storyteller. Part research project, part immersive artwork, QRAVE uncovers and celebrates the queer histories of Melbourne's City of Yarra and Birrarung Marr, a place where activism, struggle, and community resilience have shaped the past and present.

The exhibition features eight histories, told through powerful interviews and interactive QR codes that unlock the voices of local Blak queer activists, HIV survivors, and community Elders. Bold murals, transform the exhibition space and speak to themes of resistance, protest, and personal narrative.

The performance, directed by Dan Newell, is a fierce and intimate exploration of queer



history, performed by Ryan in eight-inch heels. Blurring the lines between performance and visual art, QRAVE invites audiences to reflect on the legacies of those who fought for pride, visibility, and justice.

### Medium

23-25 January

In Medium, Ari Angkasa presents a provocative and visually stunning live film performance under the moonlight. Combining elements of performance lecture, sci-fi thriller, and musical extravaganza, Angkasa explores the power of cinema and storytelling to shape our collective identity. The stage becomes a cinematic space, with Angkasa as the

intermediary between the screen and the audience, navigating the complexities of belonging, gender, and representation.

Each night of Medium offers a unique, haunting yet hopeful view into how stories can empower, terrify, and liberate and poses a thrilling challenge to traditional notions of film, theatre, and performance art/ Anything is possible under the stars.

### Matrimony

Launch: 31 January

Exhibition: 1-2 February

Conversation Circle on Love: 1 February

Matrimony is a captivating installation by Naarm-based visual artist, writer and curator Josephine Mead. Matrimony is deeply personal reflection on love, commitment, and queer identity. Drawing inspiration from Mead's own wedding, the installation features a series of evocative paintings of her bridal bouquet, accompanied by a sound score created by BJ Morriszonkle and Nero Frikschn Feuerherdt. Through this work, Mead explores the intersections of queer love and ritual, prompting new conversations about what love, marriage, and commitment mean across different sexual and cultural perspectives.

As part of the exhibition, the "Conversation Circle on Love" invites the local community to discuss love, relationships, and rituals from diverse perspectives on Saturday 1 February at 1pm.





The *Moogai* actor Tessa Rose, holding the baby, in a scene from the film.

# From stage to screen: the evolution of Tessa Rose

Tessa Rose is a renowned Darwin-based actress with nearly 30 years of experience in the creative arts and has recently experienced an exciting resurgence in her film career. From humble beginnings as a dancer at the National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association to captivating audiences in acclaimed theatre productions, Rose's journey has been marked by her versatility and commitment to her craft.

In 2024, it was a phone call that changed everything. Director John Bell, known for his work in the genre of horror, reached out to Rose with an offer she could not refuse—casting her in the lead role of Ruth in the much-anticipated film *The Moogai*. For Rose, this was not just another role, it was a milestone in her career. For the first time in nearly three decades of acting, she was cast without having to audition—a rare and exciting moment for any actor.

*The Moogai*, a psychological horror film, promises to be a major player in the Australian film industry. For Tessa, the opportunity to be part of such a high profile project marked an important turning point. Her role as Ruth was not only a significant professional achievement—it was the highest credit she had received to date, ranking 3rd in the cast list, just after industry

heavyweights Shari Sebbens and Meyne Wyatt.

This film is a rare moment of recognition that highlights this incredible cast and the experience they bring to the roles in the film.

Before stepping into the world of film, Tessa Rose was already an established figure in Australia's performing arts scene. A graduate of NAISDA, Rose's training in dance laid the foundation for her dynamic career. Her breakthrough on stage came in 2000 during the Sydney Olympics Festival of the Dreaming, where she scored her very first role on the stage playing Titania, Queen of the Fairies, and Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, in Noel Tovey's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Tessa's introduction as an actress was powerful and seductive.

From contemporary dance to dramatic theatre, she has built a reputation for her emotive performances and versatility. This ability to adapt to different artistic forms is what has made her such a beloved and respected figure in the Australian performing arts community.

Tessa's journey into film continues to evolve. In 2024, she was cast in the lead role of *Bear*, a short film directed by Rebecca Parker. This project marks another major career highlight for Rose.

The film, which premiered at the Darwin International Film Festival, *Bear* tells a gripping, emotional story, and Tessa's performance as Bev is being praised for its subtlety and power. It's clear that Rose's transition into film has been smooth, with her theatrical training giving her an edge in creating characters that feel real and relatable.

Alongside her work on stage and screen, Tessa Rose has also shared her own personal story through the one-woman show *The Daly River Girl*. Premiering to rave reviews, the performance reflects Tessa's deep connection to her heritage and her life in the Northern Territory. The show offers an intimate look at her journey as an artist and an Aboriginal woman, exploring themes of identity, resilience, and belonging.

The success of *The Daly River Girl* further solidifies Rose's place as a voice of significance within the Australian arts community, balancing her acting career with advocacy and storytelling that is both personal and universal.

Tessa Rose's career is a testament to the power of resilience, versatility, and unwavering passion. From her early days as a dancer to her critically acclaimed stage performances and now her breakout roles in film, she continues to redefine what it means to be a creative force in



Darwin-based actor Tessa Rose.

Australia. With the release of films such as *The Moogai* and *Bear*, Tessa Rose is proving that there is no stopping her as she enters this exciting new chapter in her already impressive career.

As Tessa herself reflects "It's a

full-circle moment. To be a part of these incredible projects, and to be trusted without an audition – it's a humbling experience. I'm so grateful for what I've done, and excited for what's to come."



# Sex and the city



Guy Simon.

## Play set to wow Sydney Festival

By KEIRA JENKINS



AFTER a successful Melbourne season, the play *Jacky* – which portrays the reality of city life for Indigenous people – is heading to the Sydney Festival. Portraying the central character in the play *Jacky* is both confronting and exciting for actor Guy Simon.

As a queer, Indigenous man living in the city, Jacky wears many hats, Simon explains.

He juggles a career as a cultural performer with office internships and sex work.

Simon, a Biripi, Worimi, Waddi Waddi and Walbunga man said Jacky is a complex character trying to make a life for himself in the big city when his brother gets sent to live with him.

“While Jacky is trying to juggle so many hats with his new life, he has his old life come in,” he said. “It just makes things a bit more interesting or difficult.”

Simon grew up in La Perouse and said he’s drawn from his own experiences as an Indigenous man living in the city to play Jacky.

“For most of us blackfellas when we go back home we sound like our family ... but then you get

on the phone to book an appointment and you’ve got that phone voice,” he said.

“There’s subtle little shifts that you do but it’s not until it’s spoken about that you realise that shift.”

### Second time

It’s the second time Simon has played the character in the play, which was written by Indigenous playwright Declan Furber Gillick.

The first time was in 2022 for Melbourne Theatre Company, and Simon’s excited to be doing so once again – this time for audiences in Sydney.

“When we first did it I had no idea how people were going to

receive it,” he said.

“But as soon as we got into the theatre the audiences were with us the whole time... the audiences were like Jerry Springer – like gasps and oohs – the whole time.

“Bringing it up to Sydney, fingers crossed it’s going to be the same reaction. I have a feeling it will be.”

Simon also gets to work with two new cast members for this season of *Jacky* – Mandy McElhinney and newcomer Danny Howard.

Simon also hopes the play will provoke conversations about the play’s themes, particularly around sex work and the realities of

navigating city life.

“Queer, Indigenous and sex workers of colour, they have to put up with this thing all the time of being fetishised,” he said.

“Their skin, or if you look like me and are described as ‘ethnically ambiguous’ – that gets fetishised.

“What do you do with that? Do you allow it, or do you stand up and say ‘I don’t want that’.

“There’s really complex conversations around that, that are real.”

*Jacky* will be performed at Belvoir St Theatre from January 16 until February 2 as part of the Sydney Festival.

## Wynne Art Prize exhibition to go on tour



Winner Wynne Prize 2024, Djakanju Yunupingu’s *Nyalala gurmilili*, natural pigments on bark. Image © Art Gallery of New South Wales, Jenni Carter



BATHURST Regional Art Gallery (BRAG) will present the Wynne Prize 2024, touring exhibition from the Art Gallery of New South Wales opening on 6pm Friday, February 16.

The 2024 Wynne Prize received 738 entries, with a record 21 works by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists amongst the 41 finalists including the winning work *Nyalala gurmilili* by Djakanju Yunupingu.

Yunupingu, a first-time Wynne finalist, paints lore connected to the beach at Garriri/Rocky Bay, through songs gifted to her by her father, renowned artist Mungurrawuy Yunupingu.

The work depicts the miwatj, or ‘sunrise side’ in Yolŋu Matha which relates to the north-easternmost part of Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, that receives the first light as the sun rises in the east.

This is the landscape during April and the start of Miḏawarr

(the harvest season following the wet), when the earth receives sudden surprise showers during what is meant to be the dry.

It refers to the tale of the Djulpan, a group of Yirritja spirit women who are a constellation – the Pleiades.

These are the seven sisters, who come together to gather food.

They then retreat over the northern horizon to their homes. If fires are lit before these celestial movements take place, the Djulpan become sad and cry, as is evident in this painting.

The work is now in the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Also included in the exhibition is Zaachariaha Fielding’s painting *Paralpi*, a work that depicts the sounds of Paralpi, a special place found just outside of Mimili on the eastern part of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands, South Australia.

“Paralpi is a place where people come to embrace and celebrate children,” said Fielding. “They are taught by the Elders

how to move and mimic their clan emblem, and, for Mimili, this has always been the maku (witchetty grub).”

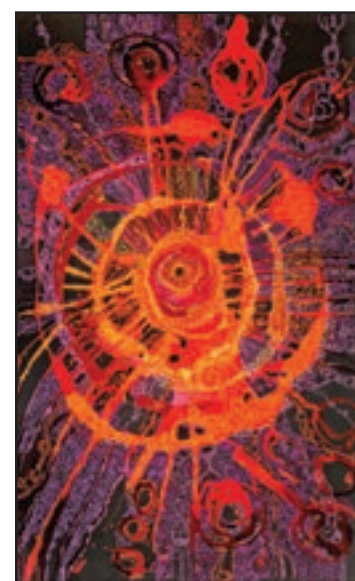
*Paralpi* is an extension of Fielding’s previous Inma series (2019-23), which includes the titular work that won him the 2023 Wynne Prize.

His scratchy application of Pitjantjatjara text as a stylistic element used to outline and define Country also captures reverberations of bodies performing the act of inma (ceremonial song and dance).

“When this inma is sung, the sounds of the soprano, alto, tenors and baritone are thick, hitting the heart and then returning to the ngura (Country).”

Judged by the trustees of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, the \$50,000 Wynne Prize is awarded to the best landscape painting of Australian scenery or the best example of figure sculpture by an Australian artist.

Following exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney, the Wynne Prize is



Finalist Wynne Prize 2024 Zaachariaha Fielding’s painting *Paralpi*.

touring regional NSW.

Alongside the exhibition will be a series of public programs including talks and art making workshops.



# Gowns join NGV collection



TWO stunning couture gowns by Miriwoong artists Peggy Griffiths and her granddaughter, Cathy Ward, have been unveiled at the recent NGV Gala.

Worn on the red carpet by emerging First Nations models Lisa Fatnowna and Charvarnie Walsh the gowns will become part of the gallery's permanent collection and go on display at NGV International in February 2025.

Drawing inspiration from the sacred native plants that are central to life and culture in the Kimberley, Western Australia, the garments were created as part of the NGV's biennial Indigenous Fashion Commission, supported by philanthropist Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family and Vogue Australia.

Griffiths' design, Jilinybeng Jardang (Bush Cucumber and Spinifex), 2024, draws upon the interrelationship of bush tuckers, such as the bush cucumber, a recurring motif in her art-making practice. The bush cucumber and spinifex are both indicative of the wet season in the Kimberley.

Griffiths' sculptural construction of the bush cucumber envelopes the garment, showcasing the multi-sensory nature of Country. This gown embodies both her family's deep cultural knowledge and unbreakable connection to the land in the Kimberley, where Griffiths lives and works.

Cathy Ward, Griffiths' granddaughter, has designed a garment that pays tribute to the boab tree, a powerful symbol of the Kimberley.

In the region's arid, dry climate, boab trees serve as natural reservoirs, storing water within their thick trunks. For Indigenous communities, these trees carry deep cultural meaning, representing both physical and spiritual nourishment.



Charvarnie Walsh, Cathy Ward, Peggy Griffiths, Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Lisa Fatnowna attend the NGV Gala 2024. Charvarnie Walsh wears Cathy Ward's Indigenous Fashion Commission garment and Lisa Fatnowna wears Peggy Griffiths' design, Jilinybeng Jardang (Bush Cucumber and Spinifex), 2024 for the Indigenous Fashion Commission. Photo: Getty Images

Peggy Griffiths is a founding member of Waringarri Aboriginal Arts and has worked at the centre since 1985. Her practice spans carving, painting, printmaking, textile and fashion design.

As part of the Indigenous Fashion Commission, Griffiths has mentored her granddaughter, Cathy Ward, who is a multidisciplinary artist and board member for Waringarri Aboriginal Arts.

Both garments were realised with the support of seamstresses Sally Jackson and Lynelle Flinders, facilitated by First Nations Fashion + Design, led by Grace Lillian Lee.

The NGV's Indigenous Fashion Commission invites First Nations artists and designers to create couture garments for the NGV's permanent collection, showcasing Indigenous designers on the national and international stage.

The project first launched in 2022 with a gown designed by Julie Shaw, a Yuwaalaraay designer, in collaboration with Bula'Bula weavers Evonne Munuyngu, Lisa Lalaywarra Gurrulpa, Serena Gubuyani, Mary Dhapalany, and Margaret Djarbalarbal Malibirr from Ramingining, Western Arnhem Land.

NGV director, Tony Ellwood AM, said, "In pairing grandmother

with granddaughter, the 2024 Indigenous Fashion Commission is a resplendent celebration of First Nations couture that shares important stories and motifs from the designers' Country in the Kimberley.

"We are indebted to Krystyna Campbell Pretty and Family, whose passionate support of the NGV's Fashion and Textiles collection has been truly transformative in recent years."

# Latest Bangarra dancers to share artistry



Biripi and Worimi woman Roxie Syron and Arabana and Gurindji man Eli Clarke have been chosen to join Bangarra.



AUSTRALIA'S leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performing arts company, Bangarra Dance Theatre, has announced Arabana and Gurindji man Eli Clarke, and Biripi and Worimi woman Roxie Syron, as the Russell Page Graduate dancers for 2025.

Both dancers will join Bangarra this month, receiving training and mentoring while working as full-time members of the ensemble for performances and touring seasons. Clarke and Syron were selected from more than 30 applicants, following auditions held in September 2024.

Bangarra Dance Theatre's Artistic Director, Frances Rings, said she was thrilled to welcome Eli and Roxie to the Bangarra community.

"Both dancers represent the very best of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander talent and I'm delighted to be able to share their artistry with audiences across the country in 2025.

"Our Russell Page Graduate Program is truly unique in the Australian arts landscape, giving the next generation of talent the

opportunity to share the story, knowledges, history and experiences of our First Peoples and create lasting impact."

Eli Clarke is a proud Arabana and Gurindji performer from Alice Springs NT, who left his hometown for Sydney at the age of 16 to pursue training in the performing arts.

His recent appearances include performing in *West Side Story* with Opera Australia, appearing on *The Masked Singer* in 2023 and performing alongside Courtney Act in the World Pride Opening Ceremony.

"The Russell Page Graduate Program is a great opportunity to further my knowledge in dance and culture, helping me to not only grow as a performer but to bridge my passion for the arts into my own culture and stories," he said.

"By participating in this organisation and its work, I hope to honour the deep cultural heritage and contributions of Aboriginal people."

Roxie Syron is a proud descendant of the Biripi and Worimi clans of the Mid North Coast in NSW and grew up on Sydney's Northern Beaches.

She began dancing at the age of five, and recently completed her

second pre-professional year with Sydney Dance Company.

Her career highlights include performing as a guest artist in Bangarra's *Horizon*, being a Netherlands Dans Theater invitee, back-up dancer on *Australia's Got Talent*, *The Nutcracker* with Sydney City Youth Ballet as well as choreographic works with Lucas Jervis, and the Locreado Contemporary Company tour.

"I'm so grateful to continue to be a part of Bangarra Dance Theatre and to learn from all the incredible choreographers. Storytelling is the heart of Indigenous culture and to be able to contribute and inspire storytelling through contemporary dance is extremely valuable."

Initiated in 2015, the Russell Page Graduate Program has seen over 20 young artists commence their first professional engagement with Bangarra. Within the current ensemble, 9 of the 16 dancers have entered the company as Russell Page graduates. The program is named in honour of Russell Page, a descendant of the Nunukul people and the Munaljali clan of the Yugambeh nation of South-East Queensland.



# Treaty Day Out returns



TREATY Day Out will be bringing a celebration of First Nations music and culture and the message of Treaty to Gippsland/Gunaikurnai Country in South-East Victoria in February 2025.

The fifth of the festival series, Treaty Day Out Gippsland will feature an incredible all First Nations line up and will be held at the Gippsland Sports and Entertainment Park in Morwell on Saturday, 8 February 2025.

The celebration is organised by the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria, an elected group of Traditional Owners from across Victoria who are negotiating Treaty between First Peoples and the Victorian government with negotiations set to continue into 2025.

This year's headliners are A.B.Original, a duo who don't hold back when they hit the stage. They continue to shine a light on the injustices still faced by Aboriginal people today. This show will be a prelude to A.B.Original's fierce new album dropping in 2025.

Country music legend, Troy Cassar-Daley, winner of 40 Golden Guitars at the Tamworth Country Music Awards, will make his Treaty Day Out debut in 2025.

Fresh off their stint sharing their culture with the world at Eurovision 2024, Electric Fields, will have everyone dancing on Gunaikurnai Country.

Blak collective 3%, made up of Nooky, Dallas Woods and Angus Field, will also be returning to the Treaty Day Out lineup. Since last year's appearance 3% released their

debut album, *Kill the Dead*, and took home an ARIA award for Best Hip Hop/Rap Release.

3% member, Yuin & Thunghutti man Nooky, said he is excited to be returning to the festival after playing Treaty Day Out in Ballarat earlier this year.

"Mob in Victoria are making history negotiating Treaty and it's exciting to watch and support them doing it. These Treaty gigs are always deadly," he said.

Warnindhilyagwa woman Emily Wurramara, from Groote Eylandt, will also be making her Treaty Day Out debut, while Uncle Kutcha Edwards and Uncle Dave Arden, both pioneers of the Australian music scene, will bring experience and depth to the bill. Hailing from Gippsland, Gunai and Gunditjmarra woman MpathSoul will join the line up and Canisha will return to the

Treaty Day Out stage in partnership with the Songlines Music Aboriginal Corporation.

First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria members will be attending and community members will have the opportunity to have a yarn and ask any questions about Treaty at an information stall.

Assembly co-chair and First Nations woman, Ngarra Murray, said Treaty Day Out Gippsland is a chance for Mob and allies alike to learn more about Treaty and show their support for the Treaty process.

"Treaty is all about empowering our communities and celebrating our cultures," she said.

"We want to see local knowledge being used to come up with practical solutions at a community level, so it's great to have events like this to bring

people together. If you're Mob, help get Treaty done – enrol with the Assembly and enjoy Treaty Day Out Gippsland," said Ngarra.

"Previous Treaty Day Out concerts have sold out – bringing visitors to regional centres, boosting local economies, and bringing communities together."

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are enrolled with the Assembly will get free entry. Eligible people can enrol online at [www.firstpeoplesvic.org/enrol](http://www.firstpeoplesvic.org/enrol).

Allies and people not enrolled will be able to purchase tickets for \$75. Concession and companion tickets are available for concession card holders and kids who are 15 years and under get free entry.

Tickets are now on sale at: [www.TreatyDayOut.com](http://www.TreatyDayOut.com)



Troy Cassar-Daley.



A.B.Original.



Electric Fields.



MpathSoul.



Emily Wurramara. Picture. Claudia Sangiorgi Dalimore.



Kutcha Edwards.



David Arden.



Canisha.



# Celebrating our kings and queens at Blak Powerhouse



CHANGING sadness into celebration for the third year running Blak Powerhouse returns on 26

January 2025 at a new location—Manning House, Sydney University.

Presented by Powerhouse and Indigenous social enterprise We Are Warriors, the all-ages event will showcase a free night of First Nations centred music, dance, art, workshops, markets and food trucks, transforming a day associated with loss and sorrow into one of power and positivity.

Headlining this year are ARIA award-winning, singer-songwriters Arrernte/Gurindji man Dan Sultan and Coodjinburra man Budjerah. They will be joined by rappers Kobie Dee and Yung Brother along with artists RIAH, Minty and Zipporah with more special guests to be announced.

Starting with an

acknowledgement of Country from 5pm at the Manning House North Courtyard, followed by a traditional dance performance, there will also be a panel discussion titled Take the Crown at Manning Bar followed by a screening of *We Are Warriors* latest film.

For families, the WAWZone arcade created by Gadigal mural artist Jeswri will be a must visit along with the hands-on weaving workshops led by Wiradjuri, Yuin and Gadigal multi-disciplinary artist Nadeena Dixon.

*We Are Warriors* founder and rapper Nooky said 2024 “has been a huge year of Blak music and arts elevating while staying grounded in staunch truths and community spirit and we’ve watched our Blak kings and queens rise.

“We’ve seen our Mob take it to new heights and we thought it’s only right to fly the *We Are Warriors* flag once again taking Blak Powerhouse to a new level.

“This January 26, join us again

as we stand in strength, power, love and joy. This time we take the crown.”

Associate Director First Nations Beau James said Powerhouse was again honoured to be partnering with *We Are Warriors*.

“Blak Powerhouse is a formidable reclamation, a showcase of some of our finest talent. Now in its third year, it just keeps getting bigger and better celebrating our strength and resilience as we stand proud and strong.

First staged in 2023, chief executive Lisa Havilah said Blak Powerhouse has grown to become an epic culture-changing event on Sydney’s calendar.

“We are so proud to present this extraordinary program in partnership with *We Are Warriors*,” she said. Blak Powerhouse 2025 takes place from 5-10pm at Manning House, Sydney University. To register go to: <https://ph.au/4fgFd4O>



Dan Sultan. Picture Michelle Pitiris



Kobie Dee. Photography by Gracie Steindl



Yung Brother. Picture courtesy of We Are Warriors



Dancers at the Blak Powerhouse. Credit Nikhil Ninan



Budjerah. Picture: Georgia Wallace



Minty 2. Picture: Roman Jody.



Zipporah. Picture: Courtesy of We Are Warriors



## event listings

### NORTHERN TERRITORY

**Two Girls From Amoonguna**  
(exhibition)

**when:** until Jan 27, 2025

**where:** Araluen Cultural Precinct, Alice Springs

**info/bookings:**

araluenartscentre.nt.gov.au/w-hats-on/two-girls-amoonguna

**National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards 2024 (NATSIAAs)**

**when:** until Jan 27, 2025

**where:** Museum and Art Gallery of NT (MAGNT)

**info/bookings:**

magnt.net.au/natsiaa-finalists

**Steel Life: Greenbush Art Group**

**when:** until Feb 9, 2025

**where:** Araluen Cultural Precinct, Alice Springs

**info/bookings:**

araluenartscentre.nt.gov.au/w-hats-on/steel-life-greenbush-art-group

### AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**Belonging: Stories from Far North Queensland**

(exhibition)

**when:** until Mar, 2025

**where:** National Museum of Australia, Acton Peninsula, Canberra

**info/bookings:**

nma.gov.au/exhibitions/belonging

**Kulata Tjuta: Tirkilpa**

(exhibition)

**when:** until Jul 13, 2025

**where:** Level 1, Gallery 15, National Gallery of Australia, Parkes, Canberra

**info/bookings:**

nga.gov.au/whats-on/

**Ever Present: First Peoples Art of Australia**

(exhibition)

**when:** until Aug, 2025

**where:** Level 1, Gallery 1–6, National Gallery of Australia

**info/bookings:** Free with ticket, for more visit

nga.gov.au/exhibitions/ever-present/

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**Radical Textiles**

**when:** until Mar 30, 2025

**where:** AGSA, North Terrace, Adelaide

**info/bookings:**

agsa.sa.gov.au/whats-on/exhibitions/radical-textiles/

**Single Channel**

touring exhibition of moving image artworks from the NGA collection (from 2000 to 2019) by artists including Tony Albert and a collaboration by Destiny Deacon and Virginia Fraser.

**when:** until Jan 24, 2025

**where:** Walkway Gallery, Bordertown

**info/bookings:**

nga.gov.au/exhibitions/single-channel/

**Sovereign Acts/Love Praxis**

**when:** Feb 17–Apr 11, 2025

**where:** FUMA Gallery, Flinders University, Bedford Park, Adelaide

**info/bookings:**

flinders.edu.au/museum-of-art/exhibitions



Architect Jack Gillmer honed his craft during a three-month residency in Paris.

# Reframing museum spaces

By KEIRA JENKINS



JACK Gillmer's inspiration to become an architect came from his own hands.

The Worimi and Biripi guri (man) had always been interested in design, and as a child remembers playing in the mud with his brother, creating canals, mountains and habitats for animals.

"I always liked getting my hands dirty and playing in the mud as a kid and I still kind of like doing that – if I go to the beach you'll always find me digging holes and creating little mountains," Gillmer said.

Gillmer sees his work as an artistic practice and an opportunity for storytelling, but it was a stint in Paris, through his 2024 galang residency program, which helped him explore new ways of being an architect.

"I wanted to use more of an artistic sculptural medium, casting and pouring plasters, sculpting and etching plaster panels," he said.

"I think it was more about that process of creation and thinking about things a little differently that really unlocks another layer of what architecture can become."

Gillmer said the residency, a partnership between Powerhouse Parramatta and the Cité internationale des art in Paris, was a massive opportunity for him.

He used the three-month stint to explore the display, treatment and storage of cultural heritage objects in institutions like museums, and reframing

these same institutional spaces through an Indigenous lens.

"Through this process I was looking at this idea of a temporary space within an institution that is a space where we can reckon with these materials and have these conversations," he said.

"It's an Indigenised space effectively, that's designed to have these conversations that reflect the communities that would be collaborating and having these conversations within these institutions."

Gillmer said his time in Paris not only offered the luxury of time to work on the project but also generated new opportunities, including being appointed a creative director of the Australian Pavilion at the 2025 Venice Architecture Biennale.

The impact of the residency will be long-lasting, Gillmer said, with plans to continue to develop his process, and connect back to his first architectural inspiration.

"In part, the residency has really transformed the way I'm going to practice as an architect in my discipline and the work that I'll be doing for the rest of my life," he said.

"Being a bit more hands-on, walking away from the pen and paper and the drawing table ... really diving back into what it was that interested me to become an architect as a child, playing in the dirt."

● Applications for the 2025 galang residency are open until January 31.

**Big Name, No Blankets**

Adelaide Festival

**when:** Mar 14–16

**where:** Her Majesty's Theatre, Adelaide

**info/bookings:**

ilbijerri.com.au/event/big-name-no-blankets/

**Saltbush Country – Tarnanthi on tour**

**when:** until Jan 26, 2025

**where:** Signal Point Experience Centre, Goolwa/Ngarindjeri Country

**info/bookings:**

agsa.sa.gov.au/whats-on/exhibitions/#touring

### TASMANIA

**luna rrala – strong women**

**when:** Jan 17–Feb 18, 2025

**where:** Bett Gallery, nipaluna/Hobart

**info/bookings:**

bettgallery.com.au/exhibitions/

**Rex Greeno: Memories through Sea Stories**

(exhibition)

**when:** until Apr 27, 2025

**where:** Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

**info/bookings:** follow the links at tmag.tas.gov.au/

### NEW SOUTH WALES

**3rd Bankstown Biennale: Same Same Different**  
(exhibition)

**when:** until Feb 1

**where:** Bankstown Arts Centre, Sydney

**info/bookings:**

bankstownartscentre.com.au/whats/3rd-bankstown-biennale-same-samedifferent

**2024 Koori Mail Indigenous Art Award**

**when:** until Feb 2, 2025

**where:** Lismore Regional Gallery, Lismore

**info/bookings:**

lismoregallery.org/

**bagan bariwariganyan: echoes of country**

**when:** until Feb 9, 2025

**where:** Bundanon Art Museum, Illaroo

**info/bookings:**

bundanon.com.au/bagan-bariwariganyan-echoes-of-country/

### QUEENSLAND

**irhythm wRites**

(a genre-defying installation by Bigambul artist Dr Leah King-Smith)

**when:** until Mar 9, 2025

**where:** QUT Art Museum

**info/bookings:**

artmuseum.qut.edu.au/whats-on/exhibitions

### VICTORIA

**Retrospective: The Art of Reko Rennie**

**when:** until Jan 27, 2025

**where:** The Ian Potter Centre, NGV Australia, Fed Square

**info/bookings:**

ngv.vic.gov.au/exhibition/reko-spective-the-art-of-reko-rennie/

**JXSH MVIR Forever**

(touring exhibition)

**when:** until Feb 2

**where:** Art Gallery of Ballarat, Ballarat

**info/bookings:**

kht.org.au/whats-on/exhibitions/

**Red Flags**

(exhibition by Wadawurrung artist Kait James, curated by Aaron Bradbrook)

**when:** until Feb 23, 2025

**where:** Warrnambool Art Gallery, Warrnambool

**info/bookings:**

thewag.com.au/exhibition/red-flags

**12th Koorie Art Show and 7th Young Mob**

**when:** until Feb 23, 2025

**where:** Birrarung Building, Fed Square

**info/bookings:**

kht.org.au/whats-on/exhibitions/the-12th-koorie-art-show-2024/

**The Wet**

Circa Cairns

**when:** Sat, Mar 15, 2025

**where:** The Round, Nunawading, Melbourne

**info/bookings:**

theround.com.au/

**TarraWarra Biennial 2025:**

**We Are Eagles**

curated by Yorta Yorta

woman Kimberley Moulton

**when:** Mar 29–Jul 20, 2025

**where:** TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, Wurundjeri Country

**info/bookings:**

twma.com.au/

**Treaty**

(an exhibition exploring the past, present and future of treaty with Victoria's First Peoples)

**when:** until Oct 27, 2025

**where:** South Rotunda, The Gateway

**info/bookings:** free, no

booking required. Details at slv.vic.gov.au/treaty

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**Walking through a Songline**

(Pop-up digital experience – based on part of the National Museum of Australia's exhibition *Songlines: Tracking the Seven Sisters*.)

**when:** until Feb 1, 2025

**where:** Wanneroo Regional Gallery, Wanneroo, Perth

**info/bookings:**

wanneroo.wa.gov.au/wanner-oogallery

**Art of Belonging: Spinifex People, Native Title and Beyond**

**when:** until Apr 28, 2025

**where:** WA Museum, Boola Bardip, Perth Cultural Centre

**info/bookings:**

visit.museum.wa.gov.au/bool-abardip

**Big Name, No Blankets**

(Ilbijerri on tour)

Perth Festival

**when:** Feb 27–Mar 1

**where:** The Regal Theatre, Subiaco

**info/bookings:**

ilbijerri.com.au/event/big-name-no-blankets/

## 2025

**Bangarra Dance**

**The Light Inside**

**when/where:** Feb, Dharawal Country (NSW); Mar, Kurna Country (SA); and Oct, Djaara Country (VIC)

**For information and bookings, visit:**

bangarra.com.au/

**Illume**

Touring nationally from June 4

**For information and bookings visit:**

bangarra.com.au/productio-ns/illume/

**Parrtjima**

**– A festival in Light**

**when:** April 4–13, 2025

**where:** Alice Springs Desert Park, Mparntwe, NT

**info/bookings:**

parrtjimaaustralia.com.au

**Barunga Festival**

Music line-up announced:

Gamilaraay musician Thelma Plum, J-MILLA x Yung Milla, N.E. Arnhem

Land band East Journey, emerging rap artist Jawoyn/Larrakia/TSI

woman Kootsie Don and Yolngu Songman and East

Journey frontman Rrawun Maymuru

**when:** June 7–10

**where:** Barunga Festival

**info/bookings:**

barungafestival.com.au/music/



# Employment

EXECUTIVE • PROFESSIONAL • POSITIONS VACANT

## Hard work leads to a better position for Lilly

By ALF WILSON



THURSDAY Island-born Lilly Bosen is testimony to the fact that hard can lead to promotion in a job.

Lilly has been promoted to assistant manager at one of North Queensland's busiest roadhouses after having previously worked there as a kitchen hand and cook.

In early December 2024, Lilly took over as assistant manager at the busy Choice Puma Roadhouse which is located on the main street of Cardwell on the Bruce Highway.

"I started here as a kitchen hand and later a cook after moving to Cardwell nine years ago and love it," Lilly told the *Koori Mail* when we visited.

The roadhouse employs 15 staff and Lilly is a Jill of all trades there doing various duties.

Lilly was packing shelves after having served on the counter and said that she has a large number of family and friends living at her home of Kubin Village on Moa Island as well as many other TS islands.

"I am from a very big Torres Strait family with relatives on most islands and keep in touch with a lot of them," she said.

There is also a large Aboriginal community and a smaller number of TS people living at Cardwell.

"They are mainly from Dauan and Boigu and some work at the sea farm," she said.

With Cardwell being strategically situated 160km north of Townsville and 180km south of Cairns, a lot of people stop there.

"They travel between Townsville and Cairns by road and some come down from the islands for events and stop here. It is always good to see them," she said.

That is especially the case during the NRL football season when many TS football fans travel to Townsville for Cowboys and NRLW home games.

"I also try and get down to Townsville for Cowboys matches," she said.

For one Cowboys home game Lilly was delighted to meet up with Fred Mills, Florence Mills (both Mount Isa) and LJ Shibasaki from Thursday Island at the roadhouse.

With Cardwell being next to the sea, Lilly also enjoys a spot of fishing when she can.

"I also go to Mission Beach fishing at times," she said.

Lilly is renowned as a friendly person who always seems to have a smile on her face.

Lilly was a boarding student at Townsville's Shalom Christian College in her school days and hopes to visit Moa and Waiben soon. She urged youth to gain a good education and work hard to achieve their career goals.



Lilly Bosen at work in the Cardwell Roadhouse.



The Choice Puma Roadhouse.

## Your guide to employment

Welcome to the Koori Mail's Indigenous Job Opportunities section. Each edition we publish employment advertisements from around the nation. To be part of this section, simply give our advertising staff a call on (02) 66 222 666, email [advertising@koorimail.com](mailto:advertising@koorimail.com) or see our website – [www.koorimail.com](http://www.koorimail.com)

*Koori Mail – Our ABC audit means our readership is guaranteed.  
No other newspaper aimed at the Indigenous market can offer this!*

**Advertising disclaimer:** Budsoar Pty Ltd, publisher of the *Koori Mail*, reserves the right to alter, omit or change advertisements, and while every care is exercised, it is not responsible for errors or non-insertions. No adjustments will be made for errors unless attention is drawn to them within the first week of

publication. Advertisers agree that all advertisements published by Budsoar Pty Ltd may also appear on a relevant web site operated by Budsoar Pty Ltd.  
**Privacy Policy:** Budsoar Pty Ltd collects your personal information to assist us in providing the goods or services you have requested, to process your

competition entries, and to improve our products and services. We may be in touch to let you know about goods, services or promotions which may be of interest to you. We may also share your information with other persons or entities who assist us in providing our services, running competitions or with other companies

who provide prizes for competitions or reader offers. If you would prefer that we do not do this, please write to us at: [admin@koorimail.com](mailto:admin@koorimail.com) or phone (02) 66 222 666, or fax (02) 66 222 600. Mail can be sent addressed to General Manager, Budsoar Pty Ltd, PO Box 117, Lismore NSW 2480.





## Community Engagement Coordinator

Part-time, ongoing (0.8FTE), Carlton, Victoria  
This is an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander designated position

Would you like to manage engagement activities/projects to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our program!

- Innovative and supportive team
- Learning and development opportunities
- Not for Profit Salary Packing and Employee Assistance Program
- Hybrid working environment

At BreastScreen Victoria, we strive to make a difference. We encourage an innovative, client focused and respectful approach to our work. The Community Engagement Coordinator at BreastScreen Victoria is a key member of the Communications and Client Engagement team (C+CE), you will bring valuable cultural insights and lived experience that enhance the organisation's ability to engage meaningfully with Aboriginal communities. You will have a combination of project management expertise and strong skills in community engagement, communication, and collaboration to achieve project goals.

We are looking for someone who has:

- A degree or relevant experience in Public Health/ Health Promotion/ Community Engagement/ Project Management or relevant discipline.
- Strong verbal communication skills, with a strong emphasis on effectively negotiating with multiple stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to influence internal and external stakeholders to achieve additional engagement with aboriginal women eligible to screen.
- Excellent written communication skills including providing high quality reports to meet deadlines, with attention to detail and clarity.
- Self-motivated with a proven ability to work independently with minimal supervision while also contributing as a collaborative and effective team member.
- Strong problem-solving skills with a proactive and solutions-focused mindset.

For additional information about working at BreastScreen Victoria, as well as the Position Description including requirements/pre requisites for this role, head to the 'Careers' page of our website Current Vacancies [www.breastscreen.org.au/get-involved/careers](http://www.breastscreen.org.au/get-involved/careers) or email Maddie (Engagement Manager) on [mcairns@breastscreen.org.au](mailto:mcairns@breastscreen.org.au). Applications can be submitted via our website.

Applications for this role will close at midday Monday 10 February 2025; applications will be assessed as received.



## Chief Executive Officer

Full Time/Permanent (35 Hours) \$100,000 - \$120,000

The Coonamble Local Aboriginal Land Council (NLALC) is seeking applications from experienced and motivated people interested in a rewarding career undertaking the challenging role of full-time Chief Executive Officer.

The position holder will provide an extensive range of assistance and support to the elected Board through the day-to-day management of the Coonamble LALC's affairs in accordance with delegated authorities; the provision of sound and accurate advice and the implementation of the Board's resolutions in a timely and appropriate manner.

The successful applicant will have demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (ALRA) (or the ability to rapidly acquire), the capacity to interpret and implement legislation and sound communication skills. Organisational and management experience is essential together with an understanding of accounting practices and principles. A sound knowledge and appreciation of Aboriginal issues would also be required.

All applicants must obtain a copy of the recruitment package containing the Position Description and selection criteria and address the selection criteria for their application to be considered. For a recruitment package contact the Coonamble LALC office, by email: [admin@coonamblelalc.com.au](mailto:admin@coonamblelalc.com.au) or on (02) 6822 2100.

**ONLY APPLICATIONS ADDRESSING THE SELECTION CRITERIA ALONG WITH YOUR RESUME WILL BE CONSIDERED.**

Applications and an up to date copy of your resume can be forwarded to [ceo@coonamble.com.au](mailto:ceo@coonamble.com.au) or marked "Confidential" and posted to:

The CEO Recruitment Panel  
Coonamble Local Aboriginal Land Council  
16 Castlereagh Street  
COONAMBLE NSW 2821

Applications close: 31st January 2025



## WE ARE HIRING!

Detour House Inc provides accommodation and care to women and girls in Sydney's inner-west through two services: Detour House and The Girls Refuge. Through these services, Detour House Inc provides a trauma-informed safe place to stay and gain greater stability in their lives. Our services are specialist homelessness services, focused on reducing the incidence of homelessness experienced by women and girls.

**Detour House - Housing Support Worker – 22.5 hours per week**

The Housing Support Worker will focus on seeking and securing long term housing options for clients exiting the AOD residential program and delivering case management support for clients.

**Detour House - Outreach Worker Position – 30 hours per week**

The Outreach Worker position will focus on delivering holistic trauma-informed and client-centred case management and outreach support for clients in the transitional program and community.

**The Girls Refuge - Youth Worker – Casual**

Casual youth workers are employed to supervise and support girls staying at our short-term refuge. Youth Workers support the case managers to progress case plans, deliver programs and activities and provide trauma-informed care.

To submit your resume or request more information, please contact [admin@detourhouse.org.au](mailto:admin@detourhouse.org.au) or call **02 9660 4137**.

A position description can be provided on request.



## Indigenous Educator/IAS Project Officer

12 hours per week  
Aboriginal Identified Position

**Would you like to join a friendly, well supported working environment? Do you want to make a difference to the lives of children in Coraki NSW?**

Coraki CWA Preschool seeks an experienced educator to join our team and deliver the Coraki Preschool Parenting and Support Project.

The successful applicant will have;

- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Above average organisation skills
- WWCC & Police Check
- Cert III in Education & Care (minimum)
- Approved 1st Aid Certificate (or willing to gain the necessary qualifications)
- Ability to manage a project budget & reporting requirements

If you possess these skills we would love to hear from you. Please email your resume and cover letter to [corakipreschool@bigpond.com](mailto:corakipreschool@bigpond.com)

Applications close 10th February 2024

## ATTENTION STUDENTS FOR AGED CARE INDUSTRY

**Are you interested in learning about how to look after our elderly community members?**

**Get a Certificate 3 in Aged Care?**

**Upgrade your Aged Care skill level?**

Courses start on Monday 3rd February 2025 in Sydney or if there are sufficient numbers in your local community.

SEND YOUR INTEREST EMAIL TO:  
[ROBERT@WISDOMCOLLEGE.EDU.AU](mailto:ROBERT@WISDOMCOLLEGE.EDU.AU)

## Are you a passionate chef seeking to work at a World Heritage site purely for its Aboriginal cultural significance

We are looking for a talented Chef to join our team at Tae Rak Aquaculture Centre & Cafe on Gunditjmara Country.

- **Flexible Hours:** Work-life balance is important to us. Enjoy a 8.30am to 3.30pm schedule, Wednesday to Sunday - preparing morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea.
- **Culinary Experience:** You'll need to keep a certain standard to express our Indigenous culture to the world! You'll need to maintain our Signature-inspired dishes. There are opportunity to work with Indigenous native foods like Kooyang (Eels) and other native fresh ingredients.
- **Collaborative Environment:** Join a small, dedicated team committed to providing exceptional dining experiences.
- **Competitive Salary:** Earn a competitive salary of \$80,000 pro rata + superannuation, negotiable depending on experience.

**If you're ready to embark on a culinary journey like no other, we invite you to apply.**

Please send your resume and a cover letter to [hr@budjbim.com.au](mailto:hr@budjbim.com.au) by 5pm Monday 27th January 2025.

## Community Engagement Officer

**Blue Card Services (Screening Services); Queensland Worker Screening Services; Harm Prevention and Regulation**

**Department of Justice and Attorney-General**

**Salary:** \$115,758 - \$123,611 per annum

**Location:** Brisbane City

**Job Reference:** QLD/609646/24

**Key Duties:**

Join our dedicated team, where you will play a crucial role in enhancing the delivery of services to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander applicants.

**Skills/Abilities:**

Key Responsibilities:

- **Support and Assistance:** Provide practical assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants throughout the blue card application process, ensuring culturally responsive and respectful service.
- **Engagement:** Take verbal submissions and assist risk assessment officers in improving applicant engagement with police and other assessable information.
- **Assessment Support:** Offer advice on cultural and regional issues relevant to eligibility assessments, and make evidence-based recommendations.
- **Community Relationships:** Build and maintain strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, providing quality assistance.
- **Planning and Coordination:** Assist in planning and coordinating community visits and monitoring application processes.
- **Policy Development:** Contribute to the development and improvement of culturally appropriate policies and procedures.

**What We Offer:**

- A dynamic and supportive work environment
- Opportunities to travel and engage with remote and regional communities
- The chance to make a meaningful impact on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants

**Requirements:**

- Strong analytical skills and the ability to make sound, evidence-based recommendations
- Excellent communication and relationship-building skills
- A commitment to cultural respect and responsiveness

If you are passionate about supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and improving service delivery, we would love to hear from you!

Apply Now to join Blue Card Services and make a difference in your community.

**Enquiries:** Jessica Simpson – 07 3211 6807 –  
To apply please visit [www.smartjobs.qld.gov.au](http://www.smartjobs.qld.gov.au)

**Closing Date:** Monday, 13th January 2025

**Queensland Government**

## download now

# KOORI MAIL

## NOW AVAILABLE

Available via Apple Newsstand, iTunes, Google Play for Android market or [www.pocketmags.com](http://www.pocketmags.com)



[www.koorimail.com](http://www.koorimail.com)





NOTICE OF CONSULTATION

EYRE PENINSULA DESALINATION PLANT – BILLY LIGHTS POINT

APPLICATION FOR AUTHORISATIONS UNDER SECTIONS 21 AND 23 OF THE ABORIGINAL HERITAGE ACT 1988 (SA)

Consultation extended until Monday 3 February 2025.

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, who is responsible for the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988* (SA) (Act), has received an application for authorisations under sections 21 and 23 of the Act from SA Water in relation to the construction of its proposed desalination plant at Billy Lights Point, south of Port Lincoln.

Section 21 makes it an offence to excavate land to uncover any Aboriginal site, object and/or ancestral remains (together, heritage) without authorisation under the Act, while section 23 makes it an offence to damage, disturb or interfere with heritage without authorisation under the Act.

The application area intersects one Aboriginal site for which records are held on central archives maintained by Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation (AAR). AAR is also aware of other Aboriginal sites – including fish traps, archaeological sites, an historic site, and an anthropological site – within 300 m of the application area.

Consultation and Submissions

Information about the application is available on AAR’s website: [agd.sa.gov.au/heritage-applications](http://agd.sa.gov.au/heritage-applications).

Traditional Owners and interested Aboriginal parties are encouraged to call AAR on (08) 8429 9419 or email [AAR.CIR@sa.gov.au](mailto:AAR.CIR@sa.gov.au) for further information or to make a submission before consultation closes on Monday 3 February 2025.



Government of South Australia  
Attorney-General’s Department

W27137

Expression of Interest



Build and run an affordable residential aged care facility in Redfern

We’re seeking expression of interest proposals from registered not-for-profit residential aged care providers to design, build and operate a residential aged care facility at 49 Cope Street in Redfern.

The project will be delivered by or in partnership with local Aboriginal community controlled organisations or Aboriginal providers, with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents and staff to be a key part of operations.

The 1,925m<sup>2</sup> property in this busy and rapidly changing inner city neighbourhood will be sold to the successful respondent for \$1 with a covenant on the land title to ensure the site is used for affordable residential aged care in perpetuity.

Attend an information session

Date: Thursday 23 January 2025

Briefing commences: 1.30pm sharp

Location: First Floor, 119 Redfern Street, Redfern

Learn more about the eligibility criteria and to express your interest at [city.sydney/49-cope-street-eoi](http://city.sydney/49-cope-street-eoi)

Applications close 11am, Friday 28 February 2025.

Preparation of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report for DA at 175 Turner Road, Currans Hill, NSW 2567

Public Notice and Registration of Interest - National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974

City Plan heritage have been engaged by Metro Property Development Pty Ltd to prepare an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report for 175 Turner Road, Currans Hill 2567 in Camden Council LGA to inform a new Development Application.

The proposed works may result in impacts upon Aboriginal objects protected under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* and will therefore require the preparation of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report. In accordance with *Heritage NSW (2010) Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents*, individuals or groups who hold cultural knowledge relevant to establishing the significance of potential Aboriginal objects and intangible cultural values in the area of the proposed development are invited to register their interest to participate in the heritage consultation and assessment process.

Contact details are as follows:

Josh Partridge  
Senior Development Manager  
Metro Property Development Pty Ltd  
T: +61 414 319 255  
E: [josh.partridge@metroprop.com.au](mailto:josh.partridge@metroprop.com.au)

Contact details for the Heritage Consultant:  
Celeste Greaves  
City Plan Heritage Pty Ltd  
PO Box Q1647, QVB Post Office, NSW 1230  
T: 02 8270 3500  
E: [celesteg@cityplan.com.au](mailto:celesteg@cityplan.com.au)

The registration period closes on Friday 31 January 2025.

Notice of an application to register an area agreement on the Register of Indigenous Land Use Agreements in Queensland

Notification day: 22 January 2025



Q12024/013 Moranbah Hospital ILUA

Description of the agreement area:

The agreement area covers about 4.1 ha over Lot 1 on Crown Plan M97326 (Moranbah Hospital) and is located on Mills Avenue in the township of Moranbah

Relevant LGA: Isaac Regional Council

The agreement contains the following statements:

- 6.1 The Parties:  
(a) consent to the doing of the Agreed Acts, including the Surrender; and  
(b) agree to the validating of any of the Agreed Acts done prior to Registration.  
6.2 To the extent that any of the Agreed Acts are Future Acts, the Parties acknowledge that the Non-Extinguishment Principle applies, other than to any Surrender.  
6.3 The Parties agree that the Surrender permanently extinguishes any Native Title Rights and Interests in the Agreement Area from the date the Surrender takes effect.  
6.4 The Surrender takes effect upon Registration.

“Agreed Acts” means all acts necessary to give effect to this Agreement including but not limited to any acts done as part of, or in relation to, the acts specified in Schedule 2;

“Agreement Area” means the land and waters described as Lot 1 on Crown Plan M97326, as shown on the plan in Schedule 1;

“Execution Date” means the date of this Agreement or, where the Parties sign the Agreement on different dates, the date on which the last Party signs the Agreement;

“Future Act” has the meaning given in the NTA;

“Native Title Rights and Interests” has the meaning given in the NTA;

“Non-Extinguishment Principle” has the meaning given in the NTA;

“NTA” means the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth);

“Parties” means the State, the Barada Barna Party, and the Corporation; and “Party” means one of them;

“Registered” means registered on the Register of Indigenous Land Use Agreements;

“Registration” means the date on which this Agreement is Registered;

“Surrender” means the surrender to the State (and the permanent extinguishment of) any Native Title Rights and Interests in the Agreement Area.

Parties to the agreement and their contact addresses:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| State of Queensland acting through Queensland Health, and the Department of Resources (State)                                                                                                                                                                                 | c/- Crown Law<br>GPO Box 5221<br>Brisbane QLD 4000             |
| Collette Brown, Nicholas Brown, Graham Stanley Budby, Lindsey Conway, Luarna Dynevor, Melanie Kielly and Nicole Muller on their own behalf and on behalf of the Barada Barna People (Barada Barna Party) and Barada Barna Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC ICN 8343 (Corporation) | c/- Dillon Bowers Lawyers<br>PO Box 626<br>Townsville QLD 4810 |

Responses to an application to register an ILUA—where the application has not been certified:

Any person claiming to hold native title in relation to land or waters in the area covered by the agreement may wish, in response to this notice, to make a native title determination application or equivalent application under a law of a state or territory in respect of any part of the area. The application must be made by 22 April 2025. If that application is registered on the Register of Native Title Claims, the registered native title claimants must be a party to this agreement before it can be registered.

Details of the terms of the agreement are not available from the National Native Title Tribunal. For assistance and any further information about this application, including the description of the area, call Claire Smith on 08 6317 5333 or visit [www.nntt.gov.au](http://www.nntt.gov.au).

For all your advertising needs



email:  
[advertising@koorimail.com](mailto:advertising@koorimail.com)



Expression of Interest

City of Newcastle Guraki  
Aboriginal Standing Committee

City of Newcastle is seeking expressions of interest for the volunteer Guraki Aboriginal Standing Committee.

The Guraki Aboriginal Standing Committee provides strategic advice and guidance with relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues and gives life to Council's commitment to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of City of Newcastle.

Share your knowledge and expertise to help make Newcastle a liveable, sustainable, inclusive global city.

Find out more and complete your application before 24 January 2025 online at: [haveyoursay.newcastle.nsw.gov.au](https://haveyoursay.newcastle.nsw.gov.au)



NOTICE TO GRANT AMALGAMATION APPLICATIONS

NATIVE TITLE ACT 1993 (CTH) SECTION 29

The State of Western Australia HEREBY GIVES NOTICE that the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, C/- Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004 may grant the following amalgamation applications under the *Mining Act 1978*:

| Exploration No. | Applicant                      | Amalg No | Area*    | Locality                  | Centroid                        | Shire             |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|----------|----------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| 30/548          | DYNAMIC METALS LIMITED         | 721793   | 31.05HA  | 55.1km NW'ly of Ora Banda | Lat: 30° 4' S: Long: 120° 36' E | MENZIES SHIRE     |
| 30/548          | DYNAMIC METALS LIMITED         | 721798   | 0.81HA   | 53.6km NW'ly of Ora Banda | Lat: 30° 4' S: Long: 120° 37' E | MENZIES SHIRE     |
| 30/548          | DYNAMIC METALS LIMITED         | 721801   | 17.77HA  | 54.2km NW'ly of Ora Banda | Lat: 30° 4' S: Long: 120° 36' E | MENZIES SHIRE     |
| 51/2199         | EVEREST METALS CORPORATION LTD | 720477   | 142.10HA | 42.5km SE'ly of Peak Hill | Lat: 25° 55' S: Long: 119° 0' E | MEEKATHARRA SHIRE |
| 51/2199         | EVEREST METALS CORPORATION LTD | 720495   | 118.42HA | 43km SE'ly of Peak Hill   | Lat: 25° 55' S: Long: 119° 0' E | MEEKATHARRA SHIRE |

**Nature of the act :** Grant of amalgamation applications which authorises the applicant to explore for minerals.

**Notification day: 15 January 2025**

**Native title parties:** Under Section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)*, persons have until 3 months after the notification day to take certain steps to become native title parties in relation to the applications. The 3 month period closes on **15 April 2025**. Any person who is, or becomes a native title party, is entitled to the negotiation and/or procedural rights provided in Part 2 Division 3 Subdivision P of the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)*. Enquiries in relation to filing a native title determination application to become a native title party should be directed to the Federal Court of Australia, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth, WA 6000, telephone (08) 9268 7100.

**Expedited procedure:** The State of Western Australia considers that these acts are acts attracting the expedited procedure. Each amalgamation application may be granted unless, within the period of 4 months after the notification day (i.e. **15 May 2025**), a native title party lodges an objection with the National Native Title Tribunal against the inclusion of the statement that the State considers the grant of the licence is an act attracting the expedited procedure. Enquiries in relation to lodging an objection should be directed to the National Native Title Tribunal, Level 5, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth, or GPO Box 9973, Perth, WA 6848, telephone (08) 9425 1000.

For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004, or telephone (08) 9222 3518.

\* - 1 Graticular Block = 2.8 km<sup>2</sup>

DMIRS\_24660



NOTICE TO GRANT MINING TENEMENTS

NATIVE TITLE ACT 1993 (CTH) SECTION 29

The State of Western Australia HEREBY GIVES NOTICE that the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, C/- Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004 may grant the following tenement applications under the *Mining Act 1978*:

| Tenement Type       | No.       | Applicant                                | Area*    | Locality                      | Centroid                         | Shire                            |
|---------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Exploration Licence | 27/725    | FMR INVESTMENTS PTY LTD                  | 5BL      | 32.9km E'ly of Broad Arrow    | Lat: 30° 26' S: Long: 121° 40' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Exploration Licence | 27/743    | ACCELERATE RESOURCES LIMITED             | 9BL      | 21.6km E'ly of Broad Arrow    | Lat: 30° 31' S: Long: 121° 32' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Exploration Licence | 28/3491   | CHALWELL PROSPECTING PTY LTD             | 7BL      | 57km E'ly of Kalgoorlie       | Lat: 30° 35' S: Long: 122° 2' E  | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Exploration Licence | 30/566    | AMERY HOLDINGS PTY LTD                   | 3BL      | 55.4km NW'ly of Ora Banda     | Lat: 30° 3' S: Long: 120° 36' E  | MENZIES SHIRE                    |
| Exploration Licence | 30/584    | DREADNOUGHT EXPLORATION PTY LTD          | 14BL     | 100.4km SW'ly of Menzies      | Lat: 30° 1' S: Long: 120° 4' E   | MENZIES SHIRE                    |
| Exploration Licence | 51/2255   | YERRIDA CO PTY LTD                       | 54BL     | 71km SE'ly of Peak Hill       | Lat: 26° 3' S: Long: 119° 15' E  | MEEKATHARRA SHIRE                |
| Exploration Licence | 51/2256   | YERRIDA CO PTY LTD                       | 54BL     | 74.2km SE'ly of Peak Hill     | Lat: 25° 54' S: Long: 119° 24' E | MEEKATHARRA SHIRE                |
| Exploration Licence | 51/2257   | YERRIDA CO PTY LTD                       | 53BL     | 66.9km E'ly of Peak Hill      | Lat: 25° 46' S: Long: 119° 22' E | MEEKATHARRA SHIRE                |
| Exploration Licence | 52/4394   | CORE VALUE AUSTRALIA NL                  | 18BL     | 110.7km E'ly of Peak Hill     | Lat: 25° 21' S: Long: 119° 46' E | MEEKATHARRA SHIRE                |
| Exploration Licence | 57/1464   | GUM CREEK GOLD MINES PTY LTD             | 9BL      | 86.1km N'ly of Sandstone      | Lat: 27° 13' S: Long: 119° 24' E | SANDSTONE SHIRE, WILUNA SHIRE    |
| Exploration Licence | 59/2929   | TASMANIAN RARE EARTHS PTY LTD            | 53BL     | 47.5km W'ly of Mt Magnet      | Lat: 28° 0' S: Long: 117° 22' E  | MOUNT MAGNET SHIRE               |
| Exploration Licence | 77/3148   | FMG RESOURCES PTY LTD                    | 2BL      | 88.4km E'ly of Hyden          | Lat: 32° 16' S: Long: 119° 49' E | KONDININ SHIRE                   |
| Exploration Licence | 77/3244   | EXCEL MINERALS PTY LTD                   | 27BL     | 24.1km SE'ly of Mukinbudin    | Lat: 31° 3' S: Long: 118° 23' E  | MUKINBUDIN SHIRE, NUNGARIN SHIRE |
| Exploration Licence | 77/3250   | GOLDZONE INVESTMENTS PTY LTD             | 1BL      | 99.1km N'ly of Southern Cross | Lat: 30° 20' S: Long: 119° 11' E | YILGARN SHIRE                    |
| Prospecting Licence | 15/6923   | NORTHERN STAR (SOUTH KALGOORLIE) PTY LTD | 162.05HA | 18.2km NE'ly of Coolgardie    | Lat: 30° 53' S: Long: 121° 20' E | COOLGARDIE SHIRE                 |
| Prospecting Licence | 16/3493   | BRANCH, Ian Robert                       | 10.02HA  | 101.4km W'ly of Ora Banda     | Lat: 30° 30' S: Long: 120° 1' E  | COOLGARDIE SHIRE                 |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5774-S | HENDERSON, Neville Walter                | 4.84HA   | 2.9km E'ly of Broad Arrow     | Lat: 30° 26' S: Long: 121° 21' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5778   | MAHONEY, Reece Anthony                   | 110.55HA | 16.8km N'ly of Broad Arrow    | Lat: 30° 18' S: Long: 121° 16' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5779   | MAHONEY, Reece Anthony                   | 113.30HA | 15.8km N'ly of Broad Arrow    | Lat: 30° 18' S: Long: 121° 16' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5781   | MAHONEY, Reece Anthony                   | 114.81HA | 14.5km N'ly of Broad Arrow    | Lat: 30° 19' S: Long: 121° 16' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5782   | MAHONEY, Reece Anthony                   | 101.20HA | 15.2km N'ly of Broad Arrow    | Lat: 30° 18' S: Long: 121° 16' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5783   | MAHONEY, Reece Anthony                   | 100.79HA | 16km N'ly of Broad Arrow      | Lat: 30° 18' S: Long: 121° 16' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 24/5816   | MURTAGH, Jason Lee                       | 170.10HA | 5.9km SE'ly of Broad Arrow    | Lat: 30° 28' S: Long: 121° 22' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 25/2810-S | MAHONEY, Lyndon Scott                    | 9.01HA   | 27.5km E'ly of Kalgoorlie     | Lat: 30° 47' S: Long: 121° 45' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 25/2811-S | MAHONEY, Lyndon Scott                    | 8.21HA   | 27.5km E'ly of Kalgoorlie     | Lat: 30° 47' S: Long: 121° 45' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 25/2812-S | MAHONEY, Lyndon Scott                    | 7.82HA   | 27.8km E'ly of Kalgoorlie     | Lat: 30° 47' S: Long: 121° 45' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 25/2853   | FORTIFY MINING PTY LTD                   | 193.56HA | 43.9km E'ly of Kalgoorlie     | Lat: 30° 49' S: Long: 121° 55' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 25/2854   | FORTIFY MINING PTY LTD                   | 181.99HA | 42.9km E'ly of Kalgoorlie     | Lat: 30° 49' S: Long: 121° 54' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 26/4742   | COSMO METALS LIMITED                     | 192.01HA | 13.5km N'ly of Kalgoorlie     | Lat: 30° 38' S: Long: 121° 30' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 26/4802   | POTTS, Christopher Peter                 | 0.47HA   | 32.1km NE'ly of Kambalda      | Lat: 31° 1' S: Long: 121° 56' E  | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 26/4803   | LEO, Geoffrey Graeme                     | 25.21HA  | 9.7km S'ly of Kalgoorlie      | Lat: 30° 50' S: Long: 121° 27' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 27/2601   | CHURCH, Sean David                       | 108.72HA | 62.6km E'ly of Broad Arrow    | Lat: 30° 21' S: Long: 121° 58' E | KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY          |
| Prospecting Licence | 30/1169-S | MADDAMS, Cecile Margaret                 | 4.86HA   | 46.3km W'ly of Menzies        | Lat: 29° 43' S: Long: 120° 33' E | MENZIES SHIRE                    |
| Prospecting Licence | 51/3406   | RENSHAW, Damian                          | 8.26HA   | 51.7km SE'ly of Peak Hill     | Lat: 25° 56' S: Long: 119° 7' E  | MEEKATHARRA SHIRE                |
| Prospecting Licence | 52/1695   | CORE VALUE AUSTRALIA NL                  | 123.21HA | 117.1km E'ly of Peak Hill     | Lat: 25° 21' S: Long: 119° 50' E | MEEKATHARRA SHIRE                |
| Prospecting Licence | 52/1697   | CORE VALUE AUSTRALIA NL                  | 156.61HA | 113km E'ly of Peak Hill       | Lat: 25° 21' S: Long: 119° 48' E | MEEKATHARRA SHIRE                |
| Prospecting Licence | 52/1698   | CORE VALUE AUSTRALIA NL                  | 178.43HA | 113.9km E'ly of Peak Hill     | Lat: 25° 21' S: Long: 119° 48' E | MEEKATHARRA SHIRE                |
| Prospecting Licence | 52/1699   | CORE VALUE AUSTRALIA NL                  | 179.76HA | 116km E'ly of Peak Hill       | Lat: 25° 21' S: Long: 119° 50' E | MEEKATHARRA SHIRE                |
| Prospecting Licence | 52/1700   | CORE VALUE AUSTRALIA NL                  | 198.22HA | 115km E'ly of Peak Hill       | Lat: 25° 21' S: Long: 119° 49' E | MEEKATHARRA SHIRE                |
| Prospecting Licence | 77/4668   | WEST AUSTRALIAN PROSPECTORS PTY LTD      | 189.82HA | 139.2km E'ly of Paynes Find   | Lat: 29° 28' S: Long: 119° 5' E  | MENZIES SHIRE                    |
| Prospecting Licence | 77/4669   | WEST AUSTRALIAN PROSPECTORS PTY LTD      | 176.72HA | 138.4km E'ly of Paynes Find   | Lat: 29° 28' S: Long: 119° 5' E  | MENZIES SHIRE                    |

**Nature of the act:** Grant of prospecting licences which authorises the applicant to prospect for minerals for a term of 4 years from date of grant. Grant of Special Prospecting Licences, which authorises the applicant to prospect for minerals for a term up to 4 years from the date of grant. Grant of exploration licences, which authorises the applicant to explore for minerals for a term of 5 years from the date of grant.

**Notification day: 15 January 2025**

**Native title parties:** Under section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)*, persons have until 3 months after the notification day to take certain steps to become native title parties in relation to applications. The 3 month period closes on **15 April 2025**. Any person who is, or becomes a native title party, is entitled to the negotiation and/or procedural rights provided in Part 2 Division 3 Subdivision P of *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)*. Enquiries in relation to filing a native title determination application to become a native title party should be directed to the Federal Court of Australia, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth WA 6000, telephone (08) 9268 7100.

**Expedited procedure:** The State of Western Australia considers that these acts are acts attracting the expedited procedure. Each licence may be granted unless, within the period of 4 months after the notification day (i.e. **15 May 2025**), a native title party lodges an objection with the National Native Title Tribunal against the inclusion of the statement that the State considers the grant of the licence is an act attracting the expedited procedure. Enquiries in relation to lodging an objection should be directed to the National Native Title Tribunal, Level 5, 1 Victoria Avenue, Perth, or GPO Box 9973, Perth, WA 6848, telephone (08) 9425 1000.

For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004, or telephone (08) 9222 3518.

\* - 1 Graticular Block = 2.8 km<sup>2</sup>

DMIRS\_24659





# A PNG side in the NRL would be a positive for the league

OPINION  
By ALF WILSON



THE entry of a Papua New Guinea side into the NRL could prove to be a huge plus for rugby league in the Torres Strait.

The close proximity of the island to PNG, plus ties to family, may well provide opportunities for islanders in the new team.

In December, the Australian and PNG governments and the NRL struck a deal that would see a team from Papua New Guinea join the Australian NRL as the 18th team.

This could benefit the Torres Strait Island's footballers.

The northernmost islands of the Straits are Saibai and Boigu. The PNG mainland is within sight of both. Under the Torres Strait Treaty, free movement is allowed (without passports or visas) between the islands and PNG for traditional activities.

In times past, many a talented footballer from the islands with the ability to play in the NRL were reluctant to travel south, even for the Townsville-based North Queensland Cowboys.

Loneliness, distance from home and the island lifestyle prevented many top-level players from top-level rugby league.

Of course, there have been exceptions.

Dolphins superstar Hamiso Tabuai Fidow, who has family ties to Saibai, was based at Cairns before his discovery.

Ezra Mam, with family on Hammond Island, was also living on the mainland when the Broncos came calling.

Talent scouts for the new PNG



Rhyse Martin of the PNG Kumuls breaks away from a tackle during the Men's Pacific Championships promotion/relegation playoff match between the New Zealand Kiwis and the PNG Kumuls at CommBank Stadium in Sydney, in November last year. *Picture: AAP*

team would do well to visit Waiben-Thursaday Island when the Zenadth Kes Rugby League is on, and the annual Island of Origin on Badu Island and Dan Ropeyarn Cup on the NPA. There is a cavalcade of talent literally on PNG's border.

A PNG NRL side would mean a lot less travel for Torres Strait players.

Of course, there are numerous NRL players who also have Torres

Straits and-or PNG bloodlines – South Sydney try-scoring machine Alex Johnston to name one.

Johnston, who also has ties to Saibai Island, has played 10 Tests for PNG, one for Australia, and 227 matches for the Rabbitohs.

Now 29, by 2028 he would still be young enough to give the PNG side a few good years.

He is the second leading try-scorer in NRL history, behind Ken Irvine.

Melbourne Storm's Xavier Coates is another.

Coates played one Test for PNG, has represented Queensland in State of Origin on 10 occasions and would be 26 in 2028.

Wests Tigers' Justin Olam played 14 Tests for the PNG Kumuls and would be 35 when the side makes it debut.

Queensland Cup and Northern Pride star Robert Derby also

played five Tests for PNG.

The PNG Hunters also entered the Queensland Cup in 2024 – and they made the finals – and there would be an influx of players to choose from that side.

The new PNG side will be based at Port Moresby, the country's capital.

The flow-on effects of the new NRL team is also sure to help boost the economies of the Torres Strait.

## Condobolin Aboriginal Health Service

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The CEO is accountable to the Board of Directors and is responsible for the day-to-day operations and leadership of the service. The CEO provides overall control and direction for the management of financial and human resources. The CEO ensures the activities of CAHS are consistent with the priorities and directions of CAHS policy framework set down by the Board. The CEO ensures the services of CAHS are of high quality and responsive to the changing needs of the client communities and funding environment.

#### Key Candidate Requirements

The Board of CAHS seeks to appoint a CEO with the following core technical competencies:

- Business Management – extensive experience in a senior management role within a primary health care/dental/SEWB/ Mental Health Organisation.
- Operational Management – Strategic approach to operational day-to-day operational management with a vision to drive the Organisations excellence as a Rural/ Remote Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service.
- Financial Management – manage the financial affairs of the organization, including budgeting, financial management and reporting to ensure compliance with legal and funding obligations.
- Staff Management – develop and build on a team that is committed to a productive working culture within the policies and procedures of CAHS.
- Aboriginal Ways of Working – manage the affairs of CAHS in a manner consistent with the principles of Aboriginal Community Control.
- External Relations and Representation – cultivate strategic alliances and positive relationships to effectively represent and advocate for CAHS.
- Tertiary qualifications in business, finance, clinical or community services disciplines (or equivalent experience)

#### Additional Requirements

- Provide services and programs that are of value and adhere to recognized quality standards.
- provide a comprehensive range of client-focused programs and services in a safe structured environment.
- ensure that programs have a high level of community confidence.
- outcomes of CAHS programs and services are reported to the Board and relevant funding areas.
- Partnerships are maintained and developed.
- funding opportunities are maximised.

#### Selection Criteria

Application for appointment to the role of CEO will be assessed based on the suitability and background and fit to the key candidate requirements. (listed above).

Positions closes: 17 January, 2025.

Please send your Cover Letter expressing your interest, Selection Criteria Responses and Resume to:

chairperson@condoaahs.com.au  
PO Box 321, Condobolin, NSW 2877.

## NOTICE FOR REGISTRATION OF INTEREST



Lithgow City Council (Council) are considering options to reinstate a permanent solution for road access to the Wolgan Valley, NSW (the Project).

The Project may pass through Maiyingu Marragu (Blackfellows Hand) Aboriginal Place and may be the subject of Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) applications made under section 90A of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. Council proposes to carry out consultation with Aboriginal communities in accordance with the Aboriginal cultural heritage consultation requirements for proponents 2010 (Heritage NSW). Information obtained from the consultation process may be used to inform an Aboriginal cultural values assessment and/or in the preparation of AHIP applications and will assist Heritage NSW in the consideration and determination of the AHIP applications.

Council invites Aboriginal groups and/or Aboriginal people who hold cultural knowledge relevant to cultural values of the area and/or determining the significance of Aboriginal objects and/or places within and adjacent to Maiyingu Marragu (Blackfellows Hand) Aboriginal Place in the Wolgan Valley (including Wolgan Gap) to register their interest in participating in a process of community consultation. Interest should be registered with the contact shown below.

Jonathan Edgecombe  
Director Infrastructure and Economy  
Lithgow City Council  
Email: wolgan.reconstruction@lithgow.nsw.gov.au

The closing date for registration is 3 February 2025.

Please be advised that in accordance with Heritage NSW requirements, we are required to record the names and contact details of each Aboriginal person who has registered an interest in this project and provide a copy of that record to the relevant Heritage NSW office and Local Aboriginal Land Council. If you are registering your interest, please let us know if you do not want your details forwarded to these organisations.



# 25 First Nations icons in '25

## 'Dizzy' Gillespie

**With more than two decades experience as a correspondent with the *Koori Mail*, PETER ARGENT will look back on the sporting careers of Indigenous stars across the wide world of sport across the 2025 calendar year**

A key member of one of the most successful eras in Australian cricket, firstly under Mark Taylor and for a majority of his career as one of Steve Waugh's pacemen, Jason "Dizzy" Gillespie was a part of the fearsome opening bowling pairing, along with the metronomic Glenn McGrath.

From suburban Adelaide, Gillespie progressed through the ranks from Sheffield Shield with the SA Redbacks to the top level of the game.

He was Australian Test cap number 370.

Tall, lean and lissom in movement Gillespie was a tearaway quick who complemented his opening partner extremely well across 71 test matches, taking 259 wickets.

He was known for his mullet hair-cut and menacing glare towards the batsman at the other end of the pitch.

Across the journey he only played 52 of the possible 92 Tests from his debut against the West Indies in November 1996.

He endured a large assortment of ailments: bruised feet, stress fractures in the back, hip complaints, side strains, shoulders ligament problems, torn calves, aching hamstrings, groin niggles and a that broken right leg.

The most brutal of these was on the Australia's 1999 tour of Sri Lanka when Gillespie was involved in a sickening outfield collision when both he and Steve Waugh were running to take a catch.

Waugh was running at pace from the infield towards the backward square leg, while Gillespie was running from fine leg. Waugh dived for the ball and the pair collided at full pace, resulting in Waugh's nose being rearranged and Gillespie's right leg being broken.

Notably, he follows another South Australian – women's cricketer Faith Thomas – as the second indigenous Australian and the first male to play Test cricket for Australia.

Gillespie's Aboriginal heritage is through his late father Neil who is from the Kamilaroi people.

He moved through the grades in the SACA district competition with the Adelaide Buffaloes in the inner southern suburbs, initially working hard to prove



Jason Gillespie with the late Faith Thomas, who was the first female indigenous cricketer. Picture: Peter Argent, circa 2016



Australia's Jason Gillespie celebrates taking the wicket of England's Graeme Hick back in 1998. (Picture: Getty Images)

himself amongst his peers.

Gillespie was a tenacious athlete with a strong belief in his ability.

He ventured into first-class cricket in the summer of 1994-95 and finished his career playing in the English county system in 2008.

While he was selected in the national team for his bowling ability, it was with the

bat that he recorded the most sublime of achievements.

In what proved to be his final Test innings in Chattogram, Bangladesh, coming in as a nightwatchman, he made a career best double century, remaining undefeated on 201 not out.

In a 320-run fourth partnership with Michael Hussey, his unforgettable innings

came across 574 minutes and 425 balls.

In 2004 Gillespie (54\*) and McGrath (61) shared a last-wicket stand of 114 against New Zealand at the Gabba to the hilarity and approval of their teammates, with Dizzy celebrating this achievement with a "Happy Gilmore" bat ride.

It was the first time he made a 50 in either Test or ODI versions of the game.

Gillespie would move into coaching with his first gig being as the coach of the SA Outbacks. This was at the Australian Country Cricket Championships tournament in 2010. He quickly moved into international ranks, first starting with the Mid West Rhinos in Rhodesia, Africa, before a five-year tenure with Yorkshire from 2012 to 2016, where he gained his reputation in this genre.

In his first season with Yorkshire, they were promoted from Division Two of the County Championship; in the second they were runners-up in the first division; and they won titles in 2014 and 2015, before narrowly missing a third in '16.

He was also the Adelaide Strikers title winning coach in the BBL across the summer of 2017-18.

Gillespie also coached Papua New Guinea for a short time, back at Sussex in the English county competition, in his home state of South Australia and for a tumultuous time was with Pakistan during 2024.

Across all his playing days for his country, Gillespie took upwards of 400 wickets in Test and One Day International cricket and was a World Cup one-day winner in 2003 when the event was played in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya. A true character of Australian cricket for two decades, he was a much-loved team-mate and tourist.



# Boland's brilliant blitz

**T**HERE were calls of "Build him a statue!" That came during Scott Boland's heroics with his devastating whirlwind performance against England in the Ashes Boxing Day Test back in 2021. That match he took 1/48 and the still astounding figures of 6/7.

Now after this most recent summer of Test cricket where Boland was a hero again against India, surely that statue is now closer then ever?

It was a terrific line in commentary at the time during one of the most amazing spells of bowling. Boland won't get that statue but if the fans had their way they'd have one built tomorrow. Given the big fast-pace bowler is humble as the day is long then he's probably a little embarrassed about that classic commentary call.

But what it does show is that Boland's match-winning efforts aren't lost on the commentators or the scores of fans he's got now. He's got a cult hero status alongside the likes of another top Australian fast bowler, Merv Hughes. The fans love him. They get excited when Boland starts to warm up for a bowling spell because the fans know that they're about to get something special delivered by Boland.

Boland is an absolute pleasure to watch. The fact that something invariably happens in his very first over says a lot about the bowler and how he can hit that line and length almost immediately. He's not just taking wickets of tailenders, but he usually cleans up the top order and some of the best batsmen the game has seen.

Boland owned the great Virat Kohli this summer dismissing one of the game's best batters on four occasions. Boland has also claimed the wicket of great English batter, Joe Root, four times as well. Root, like Kohli, has



**Kris Flanders**

been considered one of the games greatest ever.

The recent Test series against India was easily the best I've watched in a very long time. India looked like they were going to thump Australia after stunning us in the First Test. But the Aussies bounced back in the series and returned the drubbing in Adelaide, the game Boland just happened to return in. He took 2/54 and 3/51. Boland was dropped for the Third Test in Brisbane and Australia drew the match. Boland returned to his favourite ground, the MCG, and reeked havoc again there.

Boland's figures for the MCG Test was 3/57 and 3/39. He also contributed strongly with the bat as a tailender with helpful scores of 6\* and 15\*. In the final Sydney Pink Test, Boland, was brilliant. Figures of 4/31 and 6/45 saw him finish the match with 10 wickets.

Seriously... how is there still talk of this man not being a permanent member of the Australian team? He offers so much, is a match winner and gives 100% with the ball, in the field and often with the bat.

You only have to look at his gritty 15\* alongside that impressive partnership with fellow lower-order batsman, Nathan Lyon, who scored an important 41



Scott Boland during day three of the fifth Test match between Australia and India. (Getty Images.)

runs. Boland isn't your typical bowler with the bat in hand. He fights, he doesn't give away his wicket cheaply and his defence with the bat is quite impressive.

Not only is he a hero and an inspiration to thousands but he's also someone who is aware of his status and what he can do to give back to the community and give others a helping hand.

The Scott Boland Indigenous Scholarship is a collaboration between the Melbourne Cricket Education Academy, RMIT University, Cricket Victoria Foundation and of course the main man himself.

The objective of the scholarship is to provide opportunities for Indigenous

students to immerse themselves in the business and sporting industry while undertaking a Dual Diploma in Business, and Leadership & Management. Boland wants the scholarship to deepen connections, support educational advancement whilst giving the scholarship holders with career development opportunities at Cricket Victoria.

The benefits that will be bestowed upon successful scholarship holders will have their tuition fees taken care of by Indigenous Completions Initiative, Student Amenity Fees taken care of by RMIT Uni and personalised opportunities for the student to gain exposure across different areas, including within Cricket

Victoria, Melbourne Stars and the sporting industry.

It won't be just his name that's involved. Like his cricket, Boland, will be heavily involved. The pace-bowler will play an active role with the scholarship holders, be part of the selection interviews and overall support for successful students.

There's already been Scott Boland Cricket Academy for juniors at one of Boland's junior cricket clubs, the Frankston Peninsula Premier Cricket Club, which provided a high performance program open to all young cricketers. No doubt these types of initiatives will only grow in popularity given the continued rise of Boland.

## Cricket-tragic Cooley's view from the stands

By KRIS FLANDERS



**THE peoples' champion!** That's how cricket tragic, former NSW Imparja Cup manager and Indigenous cricket advocate, Peter Cooley, describes Australian Test star Scott Boland.

Australia ended a long drought against fierce rivals India and reclaimed the Border/Gavaskar Trophy for the first time since 2015 in what was arguably the greatest Test series ever seen on home soil as Australia won 3-1.

"I think he gets better the more he gets to play for Australia. That certainly showed throughout the series, but he's been a match winner for a very long time, the skill and the ability has always been there," Cooley said.

"He's sat behind three of Australia's best bowlers in (Pat) Cummins, (Mitchell) Starc and (Josh) Hazlewood and he's had to bide his time. But he has persevered and with every chance he's got he hasn't let Australia down and has been named man-of-the-match on two occasions. I think he's now earned the right to be picked in that Australian team from now on."

Boland has kept his place in the Australian team after he was named in the 16-man squad to tour Sri Lanka.

Cooley struck up a friendship with Scott Boland when the pair toured England in 2018 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the very first Australian team in 1868 that was made up of Aboriginal cricketers.

Cooley was team manager and Boland was a rising pace bowler who had the world at his feet. Cooley says to watch Boland create havoc again during the 2024/2025 summer of cricket was pleasing.

"The key to Boland's bowling is that line and length that he hits regularly is so precise. He hits the pitch hard and he gets that seam to move," Cooley said.

He's a very dangerous bowler and a real threat to any world class batter. Look at his dismissals, there's a lot of top order batsmen from all around the world, he took Virat Kohli on four occasions this series."

Boland has now worn the baggy green cap for Australia on 13 occasions and has captured 56 wickets with a staggering average of 17.66.

During the final Test match against India at the Sydney Cricket Ground,

Boland was named man-of-the-match for his 10-wicket haul.

The fans love him.

"Knowing Scotty and the person he is, he's quite humble and I think that attribute resonates with cricketing fans, throw in his cricket skills and he has become someone everyone wants to watch. Boland excites the fans," Cooley said.

Cooley recently ticked off one of the biggest boxes for cricket fans by attending the Boxing Day Test at the MCG. It's one of the greatest events on the Australian sporting calendar.

Cooley, along with his daughter, was in the crowd along with thousands of others. History was created as the five-day attendance being the largest for any Test in Australia with 373,691 coming through the turnstiles.

"What an experience, I've wanted to go to that particular Test for decades now, just an amazing atmosphere and what a game for me to finally attend. Two of the best Test teams in the world, record crowds and some brilliant performances from players in both sides. The best Test match that I've ever been at live," Cooley recalled.

"Every cricket lover looks at the calendar and marks down the Boxing Day

Test as something they'd like to go to, doesn't always happen, but it's the one you want to be at in person."

Boland has an affinity with the MCG, it was the scene of his glorious 2021 Ashes moment, and he stepped up again in Melbourne. He claimed 3/57 and 3/39, bowling figures that crippled India's batting.

He also combined for a crucial 56-run, 10th wicket partnership with Nathan Lyon in Australia's second innings.

Cooley said seeing Boland live in action at the MCG was something he'll never forget.

"To have an Aboriginal man like Scott Boland out there doing his thing was just icing on the cake for the whole experience. As an Aboriginal man myself to watch him steam in and produce on the biggest stage was a proud moment. He had such an impact on what was a really important Test match," Cooley said.

"I think he's the perfect role model for our young kids, I saw and overhead kids at the MCG wanting to be like Scotty, all the social media you see is about him. There would be kids in the backyard playing cricket arguing about who is going to be Scott Boland, he has that effect on people."





Izak Rankine is keen to play every game in 2025 as Adelaide pushes to make the AFL finals.

## Rankine vows to rebound



AFTER missing out on a third of the 2024 season, Adelaide star Izak Rankine is out to put himself in the best position possible to push for a premiership.

Izak Rankine doesn't want to miss out on any more AFL games, determined to play all the way to finals with Adelaide in 2025.

Rankine soared to career-best heights across this year's campaign despite a road pockmarked by injuries and a suspension.

The 24-year-old showed glimpses of his potential across 15 games for the Crows, kicking 29 goals with an average of 18 disposals.

First sidelined for four

weeks after hurting his hamstring in round 10, Rankine's All-Australian hopes were dashed when he was banned for an off-ball bump that concussed Brisbane's Brandon Starcevich.

The brilliant utility returned in round 22 before suffering a concussion a week later after a high bump from then-Port Adelaide defender Dan Houston.

Without their star playmaker, Adelaide missed finals for a seventh-straight season, finishing 15th with eight wins, 14 losses and one draw.

Rankine is ready to make up for lost time and has left no stone unturned during pre-season training.

"This off-season has been massive for me. I took another

step ahead and tried to push everyone and push myself," he said.

"I'm trying to become more of a leader as well. Talking to the younger boys and getting them prepared, that helps you get yourself prepared at the same time.

"I want to be consistent and play as many games as I can.

"With last year missing a few games due to suspension and injuries and things like that, I want to fix it up and just do everything I can to make sure I can play as many games as I can this year.

"That puts us in the best position to push for the year."

The same desire to end their finals drought is also burning within talented draftee Sid Draper, who has impressed as expected after

being selected with pick No.4.

"He was at the front a bit, dragging us along, putting a couple to the sword," Rankine said.

"You obviously hear talks leading into the draft and things like that but actually to see how he gets to work is pretty special. He's a special kid.

"The last couple of weeks, he's actually dominated training."

Rankine will get a chance to hit the ground running earlier than his Crows teammates after being named in the Indigenous All Stars squad on Wednesday.

Earlier, young defender Luke Nankervis signed a two-year contract extension with the Crows to cap his breakout season. **- AAP**

## New rookies to make their marks in the AFL

With the AFLM trade period and draft completed, its time to officially congratulate Ricky Mentha Jnr who was recruited to the Demons and Malakai Champion who was recruited to the West Coast Eagles. Both were recruited as results of the Next Generation academies as Category B Rookies. After losing 12 First Nations players, who were either delisted or retired at the end of the 2024 season, they are a welcome addition to the 2025 lists.

Category B rookies are recruited, rather than drafted and represent players from non-traditional recruiting backgrounds. They are



Shelley Ware

normally international players who are neither Australian citizens nor residents. There are other criteria, including a rookie zone selection for clubs based in NSW or Queensland or players who have been on a NSW Scholarship program. They can also be draft-eligible club Academy players who were nominated by their club, to develop talent by providing opportunities in the National Championship.

The main difference between a rookie player and a senior player is that the rookie player's base salary of \$100,000 is not included in the club's salary cap.

Melbourne's Ricky Mentha Jnr is from Mparntwe/Alice Springs. He is a talented small forward who trained with the Demons at the start of last year and then played the 2024 season for the Gippsland Power, who compete in the top under 18 competition in Victoria. He also played with the National Academy, Northern Territory and the Allies all to better his draft hopes.

Ricky has a lot to be proud of, as his work ethic has him as the first player from the Alice Springs region to be drafted or recruited in 10 years. He is an exciting small forward, who also showed his skills with a late-season move into defence, while representing the Northern Territory last year.

West Coast's Malakai Champion came through the Naitanui Academy and is another stunning small forward who is extremely fast and agile. He really showed off his skills last season, exciting many who watch on, especially when he kicks from inside 50. He kicked 22 goals in 18 games across club and representative football in 2024 and had everyone talking about how exciting he was to watch.

During the Draft Combine, Malakai ranked fifth on the 20m sprint (2.94 seconds) and second on the agility test (7.84 seconds). He was picked up by West Coast from Subiaco, Mines Rovers.

Good luck to both Ricky and Malakai, I hope we see them out there on the MCG and Optus Stadium this season, living the dream they have both worked so hard for.

● **Shelley Ware is a proud Yankunytatjara and Wirangu woman from Adelaide with more than 20 years involvement in the AFL.**

## Indigenous All Stars to play Fremantle



THE second wave of players joining the Indigenous All Stars squad for the 2025 Toyota AFL Indigenous All Stars game was announced late last year.

Fremantle recruit, two-time Premiership player and 2022 All Australian Shai Bolton and new teammate Alex Pearce, along with Adelaide Crows young gun Izak Rankine, and 2015 Indigenous All Stars team member and current Hawthorn player Jarman Impey, have been selected in the squad.

The four join the previously announced Brisbane premiership players Charlie Cameron and Callum Ah Chee, Fremantle's Michael Walters, West Coast premiership player Liam Ryan, 2023 Norm Smith

Medallist and Collingwood Premiership player Bobby Hill, three-time Premiership player for Hawthorn and now St Kilda star Bradley Hill and Melbourne Premiership player Kysaiah Pickett.

With the prospect of playing against his new team, Shai Bolton said: "I'm very excited, it's a game that I've always wanted to play in. I've watched a lot of my idols play in them like Adam Goodes, and I'm just excited to finally be a part of one.

"I went to the last game in Perth in 2015, it was really enjoyable and fun to watch. With all the brothers there, it will be a good week. We've got a bit of a camp before the game as well, all the boys will love it I reckon.

"Obviously I'll be playing with Son Son (Michael Walters)

for the first time – he's another one of my idols.

"It will be really fun, all the boys will be there, my family will be in the stands and I just can't wait to play."

Hawthorn star and 2015 Indigenous All Stars squad member Jarman Impey said:

"I'm very proud to be selected in the Indigenous All-Stars squad and playing amongst a few great friends and great teammates over my journey.

"I'm looking forward to representing my people and being a part of the team."

The 2025 Toyota AFL Indigenous All Stars match will take place on Saturday, 15 February 2025 at Optus Stadium in Perth, with the Indigenous All Stars taking on Fremantle as part of the AFL pre-season fixture.

### Indigenous All Stars Squad

**Callum Ah Chee – Noongar, Palyku and Nyikina, Yawuru**  
**Shai Bolton – Minang and Wilman**  
**Charlie Cameron – Waanyi and Lardil**  
**Bobby Hill – Whadjuk, Ballardong, Noongar**  
**Brad Hill – Wilmen, Noongar**  
**Jarman Impey – Yorta Yorta**  
**Alex Pearce – Palawa**  
**Kysaiah Pickett – Yamatji, Noongar**  
**Liam Ryan – Yamatji**  
**Izak Rankine – Kokatha and Ngarrindjeri**  
**Michael Walters – Whadjuk, Wilmen and Ngarrindjeri**





Jenni-Sue Hoepper, middle, with Tallisha Harden, left, and Stephanie Mooka when they played for Queensland at State of Origin. (QRL pic)

# Hoepper hops on the Northern Pride train

By ALF WILSON



FORMER Australian Jillaroos rugby league representative and the inaugural female Dally M Medal winner Jenni-Sue Hoepper will come out of retirement to play with the

Northern Pride ladies team in their debut season in an expanded 2025 Queensland BMD ladies premiership.

The entry of the Northern Pride side based in Cairns for the revamped 2025 BMD Statewide Women's premiership is a major boost for talented Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander players.

Jenni-Sue, who has Saibai and PNG descent, won her Dally M medal in 2015 and has also represented the Queensland Maroons at ladies State of Origin level, the Jillaroos (2013, 14, 15 and 17) and the PNG Orchids on the international stage.

Previously quality First Nations players who lived in the TS islands, NPA, Cairns or Townsville could be picked to line up for the Mackay Cutters which took out the last BMD grand final.

Or move south to Rockhampton where the CQ Capras are based or to southern Queensland where the other clubs are.

Some of the Cutters team lived in Townsville or Cairns but with a Pride team now in the mix makes it a much more enticing prospect for TS girls.

That Cutters side which was coached by Marco Peters included TS stars Jasmine Peters (Badu), Tahlulah Tillett (Moa), Sareka Mooka (Mabuiag) and Essay Banu (Boigu).

Along with Tallisha Harden they also represented the Cowboys side with distinction in the NRLW season. Sareka and Essay also played for the PNG international team.

Jenni-Sue said she was very excited but also very honoured to be able to represent Northern Pride for the first time especially in the inaugural women's team.

The QRL confirmed in December that the Pride ladies team would be included in the comp and will play their first game in the expanded 12-side comp on Sunday June 15 against the Brisbane Tigers at Totally Workwear Stadium.

Cairns-based Mabuiag islander Stephanie Mooka has played beside

Jenni-Sue at Origin level and said the Pride entry was a wonderful boost for Indigenous girls.

"I love it, Jenni-Sue is going to be a big boost and she will add experience and the girls will enjoy playing beside her. A great signing," Stephanie said.

Stephanie said Pride officials has been active checking out girls at the recent Cairns ladies Indigenous Allstars carnival.

"There is a training day for girls who potentially could be signed by the Pride at Barlow Park in Cairns on Saturday, January 11," Stephanie said.

Thursday Island based former player and now administrator and volunteer Ella-Faye Peters-Hosea) was delighted that the Pride would be in the comp.

"For Northern Pride to be in the BMD Women's Premiership, this means forging a new path for success in women's rugby league here in the far North Queensland. Especially as we possess many untapped talents," she said.

The inclusion of the Pride and Ipswich Jets as part of the QRL's expansion strategy follows the successful debut seasons of the Western Clydesdales and Sunshine Coast Falcons this year.

Pride chief executive officer Garreth Smith, a former top player who lined up for winning team Kulpiyam at the 2007 and 2008 Island Origin series on Badu and for the Central Cape Suns at a Zenadth Kes carnival on Waiben, said the Pride inclusion was the culmination of years of hard work and dedication.

"We are immensely proud to be part of the 2025 BMD Premiership, a competition that celebrates the best in Queensland women's rugby league. This is a testament to our commitment to the game, to developing pathways for female athletes, and to providing opportunities for our girls to excel at the state level. We are proud to represent Far Northern Queensland and look forward to showcasing the talent and spirit of our team," Smith said.

QRL general manager of performance and pathways Glenn Ottaway said the decision to run BMD Premiership fixtures in conjunction with the NRLW would have multiple benefits.

"This approach allows us to support the elite game with players transitioning between competitions when not selected in NRLW," Ottaway said.



Keanu Pinder takes a shot. Pictures: Peter Argent

# Pinder in his prime



HAVING moved into the prime of his career over the past couple of campaigns, Keanu Pinder is one of the athletic and exciting big men in the Australian National Basketball League.

At his third NBL club, after stints with the Adelaide 36ers and Cairns Taipans, Pinder is at home with the Perth Wildcats.

He has a strong skillset and in October 2024, scored an equal career-high 34 points in a win over the Sydney Kings.

In Adelaide he took on former NBA power forward Montrezl Harrell and

came out on top.

Pinder's mother, Tracey Smith, is where Keanu inherits his Indigenous heritage.

She was born in Kalbarri, Western Australia, but lived most of her life in the Kimberley region.

(Keanu is a second generation hoops player in Australia as his father, Kendal or "Tiny" also played professionally for the Perth Wildcats in the NBL.)

The boy from Derby in the Kimberley has become a genuine star in his own right.

Images - Peter Argent



Keanu Pinder drives to the basket.



# Skinner set for a bumper season

By KRIS FLANDERS



EXCITED! That's the feeling for Indigenous All Stars head-coach, Jess Skinner, with the annual clash between the Indigenous and the Maori now just 4 weeks away.

The two games – both men and women – will be held on Saturday, February 15, at Parramatta in Sydney's west.

Skinner says this game lets rugby league fans know that football is back.

"It's a great way to start the league year. I know the girls are really keen to get themselves moving after their breaks and get back into it. This game sets them up for the season, some of these girls will go to Las Vegas for the Jillaroos as part of the season opener NRL fixture, then the State of Origin camps and series and then the NRLW," she said.

Skinner has been deeply involved in rugby league for decades. Before becoming the very first female Indigenous head coach of the Indigenous Women's All Stars team (2023), she guided the First Nations Gems and the NRL Indigenous Women's Academy.

She's also been Assistant Coach with the Prime Minister's XIII, Newcastle Knights NRLW and the Australian Jillaroos.

"To be coach of this team has been one of my goals for a very long time. It's an all-year-round job being the coach of the



Indigenous All Stars head-coach, Jess Skinner.

Indigenous team, it's about supporting our players and particularly those who are making their way through the ranks. We've also made sure that this year's coaching staff are all Indigenous too, you know physios, analysts and trainers. That's never been done before," Skinner said.

"It's a short preparation really, I don't have months or weeks to work with them, it's a couple of training sessions. It's about making sure that the girls are

connected off the field and working together on the field so that they can execute the plan. It's also about providing a safe space for the players where they can be themselves and thrive within their culture."

The female Indigenous All Stars side will be aiming to go back-to-back and with names like Olivia Kernick, Tamika Upton, Mahalia Murphy, Quincy Dodd and Jaime Chapman to most likely get a start then that accomplishment could very well

happen.

"There probably won't be too many changes from last year but we obviously have to assess and look at who's available, injuries and things like that. I'm really excited that we get to travel with 20 girls this year, instead of 18, so there may be the opportunity to blood some debutant," Skinner said.

"It does give us a headache but it's a good headache to have and it shows the immense talent and depth our sisters have in the

game today. There's still work to be done and make sure that those pathways are always strong and always clear. We always need to support and care for them so that they can reach the top."

The All Stars match and the week leading up to the game is extra special for Skinner. She gets to celebrate both her Aboriginal and Māori heritage and it's a privilege to be involved.

"It's always a split household for my family on game night. My dad goes for the Maori team and my mum goes for the Indigenous with my brothers and sisters split too. But they're just proud to see what I'm doing, living my dreams, for me personally it's about those pathways and opportunities for both cultures to shine, play football and go onto higher honours too," Skinner said.

"The game is the cherry on top for the whole week really. It's not every day that Indigenous and Māori people get to see and meet their idols, so that community engagement is something all the players and staff look forward to. Plus that cultural exchange between the two cultures is always beautiful and always powerful."

Skinner is one of the most respected coaches in rugby league today and hailed as someone with a phenomenal football brain.

Not surprisingly she would love to one day step up to the ultimate level and be a head coach in the NRLW.

# Gearing up for Goldfield Ashes

By ALF WILSON



HUNDREDS of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male and female players will participate at Australia's biggest cricket carnival, the Goldfield Ashes, which won't be

held this year on the normal Invasion Day weekend.

The Goldfield Ashes at Charters Towers will be held from January 17 to 19 and more than 240 teams will compete in four men's and a women's division.

Since it commenced with just six teams in 1948 the Ashes has been mostly held over the Invasion Day weekend.

First Nation's cricketers and their supporters will travel to Charters Towers which is 130km inland from Townsville from many regions including Moun t Isa, Cairns, Atherton Tablelands, Mackay, Cape York, NPA and even as far away as Brisbane.

Many local Aboriginal players from Charters Towers and Townsville will compete and some of the sides will consist of mostly Indigenous players.

It has been estimated that about a fifth of all players will be Indigenous.

Glenn Butler has been a long time organiser of the aptly named West Indigies side which will again field sides.

"We will have men's and women's teams again. In the men's team I have the two Power boys from Bowen Errol and Greg. Then we have the usual players in Simon Leo, Richard Butler, Matty Masso Jnr and brothers Joel Masso and Bobby Dallachy."



Action between Garbutt Magpies and West Indigies at a previous Ashes.

Glenn said.

Garbutt Magpies spokesman Jermaine Ross said his club would also have men and women's sides.

"Yes we will be putting in a ladies and men's teams for 2025," Jermaine said.

Another side with many Indigenous players will be Johnny Macs XI organised by Stephen MacDonald.

Mt Garnet, Hughenden and local Towers club Black Bream will have teams with Aboriginal cricketers in their line ups.

Black Bream is named after founders caught plenty of fish of the same name in the Burdekin River and will have men and ladies

teams competing.

The strong Black Bream women's team will be one of the favourites in the hotly contested ladies division.

Many carnival teams have some wacky rules.

In the men's B-2 and social grades which have by far the most teams, anybody who drops a catch or scores a duck, has to change into a woman's dress for the remainder of the day's play.

A Grade and B-1 men's grades are much more serious.

The carnival is a place where people catch up in a friendly atmosphere.



Garbutt Magpies cricketers Jermaine Ross and Nicole Ross are getting ready for the Goldfield Ashes.



# Dan Christian, 41, comes out of retirement



**AUSTRALIAN**  
Twenty20 legend Dan Christian has come out of retirement and to the rescue of the

BBL's injury-hit Sydney Thunder. The 41-year-old allrounder last played professionally for the Sydney Sixers two summers ago and has since served as an assistant coach at the Thunder.

Christian has not played a professional match since the Sixers' BBL12 semi-final loss to the Brisbane Heat, but has been keeping fit with UNSW in the NSW Premier Cricket competition.

He will join an elite group of players to feature in the BBL in their 40s, including Brad Hodge, Peter Siddie, Fawad Ahmed and the late Shane Warne – the oldest player in league history at 43.

Christian is available for the rest of the tournament, which has already featured big improvements from reigning wooden spooners the Thunder.

Christian's comeback follows injuries to Daniel Sams and Cameron Bancroft, both sidelined after a horror collision in the field during last week's win over the Perth Scorchers.



Dan Christian is to return to the BBL at age 41 and will play for the injury-hit Sydney Thunder.

Sams (concussion) and Bancroft (fractured shoulder blade, broken nose, concussion) joined a mounting injury toll that has also sidelined Jason Sangha, Nic Maddinson and Tanveer Sangha.

In addition, the Thunder could lose Sam Konstas to Test duties later in the tournament, and expect to farewell internationals Sherfane Rutherford and Lockie Ferguson prematurely as well.

Sams took to social media on

Monday to say his condition was improving, while currently ruled out until at least late next week under concussion protocols.

"I am on the mend and can't wait to be back," Sams posted on Instagram.

"Thanks for all the well wishes over the last couple of days. It has given me a lot of gratitude for the support I have around me.

"A massive thank you to Thunder staff, Scorchers staff and CA medical staff for looking after Cam and I."

In Christian, the Thunder at least have an experienced allrounder.

"We're very fortunate to have Dan already within the club," said Thunder general manager Trent Copeland.

"He's a legend of the BBL and we've got no doubt he's still up to the level. We can't wait to see him jump back into this environment and make an impact."

Christian is considered a T20 specialist, having played 409 games for 18 teams in six countries across a globetrotting career.

He represented Australia 43 times in white-ball cricket and has won three BBL titles - one each with the Brisbane Heat, Melbourne Renegades and Sixers.

- AAP



Indiah Bowyer is enjoying playing in the WNBL as a fully-fledged player.

# WNBL rookie on the rise

By PETER ARGENT



ONE of the two First Nations talents on the University of Canberra Capitals (UCC)

rosters along with teenager Monique Bobongie, 21-year-old Indiah Bowyer is enjoying her first year in the WNBL as a fully fledged player.

A versatile basketballer with the ability to be used in multiple roles, Bowyer is athletic and runs the lanes.

Despite being in her rookie season, Bowyer has the attributes to become a long-term player at this and higher levels.

"My foundation club was the Cairns Dolphins, from my hometown and I have played NBL1 for the Townsville Flames for the past two seasons," Bowyer told the *Koori Mail*.

"I went through the North Queensland representative junior programs from Under 14s, through 16s and Under 18s nationals and played for Queensland at Under 20s level.

"There was a development role with Townsville Fire for the 23-24 season, and I was used

mostly as a shooting guard.

"It was always a goal to make it into WNBL and now it's about becoming more comfortable at the level with each outing.

"Future goals are to be an (Australian) Opal one-day and make the most of my basketball career.

"I turn 22 at the end of this WNBL season, on April 16."

Bowyer confirmed that her mum, Delece and dad, Leon have been really important components in her basketball journey.

Delece's heritage is from Binhthi Warra and Dhaarba Warra tribes, while her father Leon is from the Olkola nation.

She has strong family links with five older brothers, Chastyn, Jaidyn, Joshua, Kye and Jack, who are all talented sportsmen in their own right, in their respective sports.

"Josh was on Bronco's training list for a little while," Bowyer remembered.

"Kerry Williams, who is now on the Cairns coaching staff, was my coach growing up and significant mentor through juniors."

Wearing the number 1

singlet for the UCC, she confirmed the difference between NBL1 – North and WNBL is the breadth of talent and physicality of the contest, along with how quick the game moves.

And yes... this Queenslander has adjusted to the weather in Canberra.

There are sporting genes in the wider family, as Indiah Bowyer's uncle and sporting hero is former National Rugby League star Matt Bowen from the North Queensland Cowboys.

"When we were younger, nan (Lillian Bowen) would rent a bus and take all the kids to watch Matt play 1300 miles away," Bowyer smiled.

"It was great fun and there are a many memories travelling down and watching him star in the Cowboys."

Footnote – Bowen was an Australia international and Queensland State of Origin representative fullback, he played in the National (NRL) the North Queensland Cowboys, with whom he set the club's record for most matches with 270 appearances, also playing in the Super League for English club, the Wigan Warriors.





Ashleigh Gardner and English opener, Tammy Beaumont, at the SCG to kickstart the 2025 Ashes series.

## On-fire Ash ignites Ashes debate

By KRIS FLANDERS



LET'S have more.

That's what brilliant Australian all-rounder, Ashleigh Gardner, wants when the subject turns to future Test matches against England for the Ashes.

Currently, there's only the one-off Test between the two nations during their multi-format, points based series, which features three One Day Internationals (50 overs) and three T20 matches.

Gardner expressed her wish for more Tests to be played during their Ashes series.

"It is obviously going to make the tours a lot longer, I am not sure where you are going to fit it in, knowing we have to play overseas as well," Gardner said.

"But personally I would love to see three (Tests).

"I would just love to play more Test cricket against England. Playing the one Test feels like a bit of a novelty at times."

### English support

Ash Gardner wasn't on her own either. Fellow Australian players and even English cricketers would like more matches in the longer format.

"I completely agree with Ash. I

would love to see three (Tests). The best thing about the Ashes is the narrative, the rivalry and how it builds over time. As an opening batter, that's why you love the game, it's a battle of trying to get one up over an opening bowler. It builds even more in Test cricket." English opener Tammy Beaumont said.

At present, the 2025 Ashes series will start with three ODI's in Sydney, Melbourne and Hobart. Followed by three T20 matches in Sydney, Canberra and Adelaide. The one-off Test match will be played as a day/night clash at the MCG from January 30 till February 2.

Australia are the current holders of

the Ashes trophy.

Ash Gardner took 8/66 in the final innings of the most recent Ashes Test at Trent Bridge, England, in 2023 where the match attracted a world-record crowd of 23,207 across five days.

Heading into the Ashes series, Gardner, from her 6 Tests has made over 280 runs and captured 23 wickets.

In One Day Internationals, the all-rounder has made over 2,050 runs and is just three wickets away from reaching the 100-wicket milestone. In the T20 format, Gardner, has played 95 games with 1,596 runs and has captured 78 wickets.



Scott Boland of Australia holds the player of the match medal during day three of the Fifth Men's Test Match in the series between Australia and India at Sydney Cricket Ground on January 05, 2025 in Sydney, Australia. (Picture: Getty Images)

## Build him a statue!

By KRIS FLANDERS



THAT call came during Scott Boland's heroics with his devastating whirlwind performance against England in the Ashes Boxing Day Test

back in 2021. That match he took 1/48 and the still astounding figures of 6/7.

Now after this most recent summer of Test cricket where Boland was a hero again against India, surely that statue is now closer than ever?

Full story, page 43.