



# Koori Mail

*The Voice of Indigenous Australia*

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

EDITION 850

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2025

PUBLISHED SINCE 1991

Phone: (02) 66 222 666

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

Recommended price \$2.99 (GST-inclusive)



## Flying high in the desert dust

PAPUNYA Eagles appear on track for another strong showing in the Central Australian Football League's community competition after overcoming fierce rival Yuendumu in a thriller on the red dust of the western desert. See page 51. Picture Guy McLean

# CULTURE WARS NOT WELCOME



AUSTRALIANS have delivered a tough message to the politician who walked out on the Apology to the Stolen Generations, refused to stand in front of First Nations' flags, criticised Welcome to Country ceremonies, and wanted to build nuclear reactors on the country's ancient landscape.

You're not welcome.  
Former opposition leader Peter

Dutton, who chose to introduce 'culture wars' in the final weeks of his election campaign, not only lost the election, but also lost Dickson, his seat in Parliament after two decades.

Labor's Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Malarndirri McCarthy, was re-elected, as was Labor's Marion Scrymgour, who returns to the NT federal seat of Lingiari with a 6.1 per cent swing to Labor, and Wiradjuri man Dr Robert Reid in the seat of Robertson on the NSW Central Coast.

Ms Scrymgour, who has links to the Tiwi Islands through her mother and Central Australia through her father, was first elected as Member for Lingiari in 2022.

Shadow Minister for Indigenous Australians Jacinta Nampijinpa Price, who was prominent during the campaign, was asked by the ABC if she was partly responsible for the loss after being photographed in a Donald Trump-style Make America Great Again hat, and repeating the phrase during the campaign, Ms

Price rejected the suggestion, blaming the media.

She also suggested that an investigation by the Australian Electoral Commission should be undertaken into voting practices in remote Aboriginal communities.

Labor's key funding announcements made during the campaign centred on 800 additional jobs for the Indigenous Rangers Program, \$5 million for training in remote essential care services, and funding for two new Headspace services to be



Former opposition leader Peter Dutton not only lost the election, he lost his seat in Parliament.

launched in remote communities.

Key Voice architect Thomas Mayo has declared that Labor's resounding election victory was a national endorsement of Welcome to Country ceremonies.

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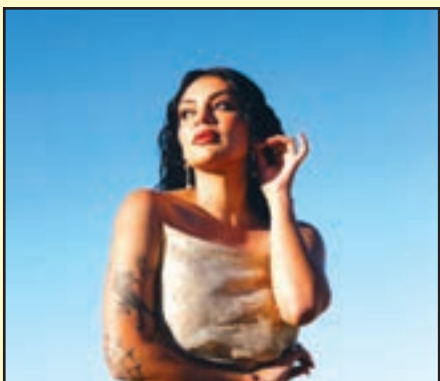
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# OUR CHILDREN



Shirley Waia, Ibara Waia, aged seven, Memedh Tabuia, aged eight, and Altevriestar Tabuai at the Through our Eyes youth event in Townsville last month. Below, members of the Shalom Dance Group. Pictures: Alf Wilson.



## 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.

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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)

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### INFOKOORI site address

<http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/infokoori>  
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# Jury to determine fate of four on trial for murder of Cassius Turvey

By AARON BUNCH



HOURS of video footage captured before and after an Indigenous teenager was fatally bashed have been instrumental in

framing the prosecution case against his four accused murderers.

Cassius Turvey, a 15-year-old Noongar Yamatji boy, died 10 days after he was chased, knocked to the ground and "deliberately struck to the head" with a metal pole in Perth's eastern suburbs on October 13, 2022.

Aleesha Louise Gilmore, 23, her then-boyfriend Jack Steven James Brearley, 24, and his mates, Brodie Lee Palmer, 29, and Mitchell Colin Forth, 27, are on trial in the West Australian Supreme Court for Cassius' murder.

Prosecutor Ben Stanwix says Brearley delivered the fatal blows while "hunting for kids" because somebody smashed his car windows, and alleges Forth and Palmer aided him and, along with Gilmore, shared a common purpose.

Brearley denies wielding the pole, saying he only punched Cassius after the teen knifed him. He says it was Palmer who bashed him with it, which Palmer denies. Dozens of CCTV video clips were played for the jury during the mammoth 12-week trial, including hours of footage recorded by motion-activated camera at the home Gilmore shared with Brearley and her family.

The prosecution alleges some reels show the group with weapons including knuckle dusters, a baseball bat, an axe and shopping trolley parts.

"Somebody smashed my car and they're about to die," Brearley is accused of saying in one video.

The same camera also captured Gilmore's mother discussing by phone the attack on Cassius in the hours after the incident.

Prosecutors say Brearley was bragging on the other end of the call, with a voice heard saying, "He was lying in a field and I was smacking him with a trolley pole so hard."

Brearley denies it. He also insists it wasn't him mocking Cassius when the voice mimics the teen saying, "I'm so sorry, don't hurt me."

Yet he agreed during his week in the witness box that he and Palmer re-enacted the bashing after the alleged incident, which was also recorded on CCTV, and blamed each other for the murder.

Palmer told the jury he was "full of piss" the day Cassius was targeted and waited in his ute near where Brearley ran into bushland with a pole after a group of teens including Cassius.



A screen shot from videos released by the Supreme Court of WA that shows Aleesha Louise Gilmore, 23, her then-boyfriend Jack Steven James Brearley, 24, and his friends, Brodie Lee Palmer, 29, and Mitchell Colin Forth, 26, who allegedly drank alcohol in the hours before Cassius Turvey was fatally bashed. (AAP)



Cassius Turvey, a 15-year-old Noongar Yamatji boy, died 10 days after he was chased and knocked to the ground. (AAP)

He said Brearley yelled for help and said he'd been stabbed, and that when he walked into the scrub, he found Brearley standing over a blood-covered Cassius.

Brearley's version is that he chased Cassius towards a creek and after the teen slowed and tripped on a piece of wire, the pair ended up in the dirt.

He told the jury Cassius stabbed him in the leg with a steak knife and he tried to flee but the teen held on to him, so he punched him.

He said he landed two blows on Cassius's face and called out to Palmer because he had been stabbed.

Brearley, who is also accused of trying to frame another man for the alleged murder, said Palmer, whom he allegedly sold

drugs for, appeared on the scene with a shopping trolley handle and was the one who hit Cassius.

But a murder weapon has not been found.

In one police interview, Brearley told detectives there were 20 armed "kids" mouthing off at him and he ran at them.

He said he chased "the fat one" and that after he punched him three times, Cassius cried and pleaded with him to stop and apologised over the alleged knifing, but his version of events changed as the interview wore on.

Prosecutors say it was another teen who slashed Brearley's leg and his attack on Cassius was a fury-filled, vengeful act of vigilante violence.

CCTV recorded outside Palmer's house in the hours before Cassius was bashed shows the accused murderers drinking alcohol before climbing into Palmer's "monster" ute and leaving.

The court was told they drove to Gilmore's home after her younger brothers messaged her about social media threats they received about a potential home invasion, with calls for them to meet in a nearby park for a fight.

Palmer, Brearley, Forth and Gilmore later drove to a train and bus station to look for the teens Brearley believed were behind the threats and damage to his car.

About the same time, Cassius and a large group of fellow students were on a bus to a field near Gilmore's home to watch a fight being talked about on social media.

CCTV on the bus showed him dressed in a green school uniform t-shirt and dark shorts with a black backpack.

He's tall and calm and stands quietly near the rear doors with his right hand wrapped around a yellow pole to steady himself.

He appears deep in thought as the group of students chat with each other around him.

Cameras on buildings and in the bus recorded Cassius and the group stepping off at a stop about the same time Palmer allegedly drives his ute with his co-accused past.

In the minutes that follow, as the students walk down a street, Gilmore leaves Brearley, Palmer and Forth after an argument.

Prosecutors say the three

men then confronted Cassius' group before he was attacked.

A witness, who cannot be named for legal reasons, told the jury he was among the teens.

Then 13, he said he ran into bushland in fear of the men and that after crossing a creek, he looked back and spotted his "close mate" Cassius get hit by a man with a description matching Brearley.

The teen said Cassius, who suffered brain bleeds consistent with blunt force trauma, was bleeding from the side of his head and crying in pain.

He was laid to rest just over a month later by hundreds of mourners, who celebrated his life.

Dashcam footage taken in a nearby car park later showed Cassius lying on the ground near an ambulance stretcher with a security guard helping him.

The trial has also shown video recorded at Gilmore's home that prosecutors described as the "13 minutes of mayhem".

In it, Gilmore allegedly said: "The little c\*\*t just got f\*\*king bashed" and Forth allegedly said: "F\*\*k. We done it" and "let's go back there and f\*\*k everyone of them up".

It was followed by Brearley, who allegedly said: "I bashed the c\*\*t on crutches and in the bush" before he said "I'm not going to jail".

The jury has started deliberations with Chief Justice Peter Quinlan giving the jury directions on Friday prior to its retirement.

— AAP



# NDIS provider pleads guilty over bathtub burns death



A REGIONAL disability provider has admitted to serious safety breaches after the death of a young Aboriginal woman who was badly burned in a bathtub.

Kyah Lucas suffered burns to almost half her body when she was bathed at a home in Orange, in central western NSW, by two workers from NDIS provider LiveBetter in February 2022.

Ms Lucas was removed from the bath with her skin peeling, and a temperature control panel showed the water was 60C rather than the usual maximum setting of 42C.

The 28-year-old, who had conditions that left her non-verbal and with thin skin, died in a Sydney hospital five days later.

LiveBetter was fined a record \$1.8 million in the Federal Court in April 2024 after the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission took action against it over multiple failures to comply with its standards of care.

On Monday last week, the care provider pleaded guilty in the NSW District Court to a criminal charge in a separate case brought by SafeWork NSW.



LiveBetter has pleaded guilty to breaching workplace safety laws after the death of one of its clients.

It has admitted one count of breaching its primary duty of health and safety regarding Ms Lucas.

A charge of failing to immediately notify the workplace regulator of Ms Lucas's injuries was dismissed.

The risk to Ms Lucas, whose conditions left her vulnerable to burns, was being bathed in water that was an

unsafe temperature, the regulator alleged in documents before the court.

The organisation was accused of negligent or reckless conduct through failing to implement safety procedures, like audits of the hot water system or double-checking the temperature with a thermometer.

LiveBetter was also accused of failing

to develop adequate training for its workers on bathing NDIS clients in line with their needs or how to respond after a burns incident.

In February, LiveBetter said in a statement that while it could not comment on the case, it was working with the regulator and other agencies to ensure a safe work environment for staff and clients.

"LiveBetter continues to mourn the tragic death of Kyah Lucas ... and our thoughts remain with her grieving family," it said.

During the Federal Court case, Justice Elizabeth Raper heard LiveBetter staff looking after Ms Lucas learned "on the job" and that their training assessments were limited to an online quiz.

"The specific harm suffered by Ms Lucas was of the most acute kind, so too can it be said of the harm to Ms Lucas' family," Justice Raper said in her judgment.

"There are no words to properly express the degree of the harm suffered."

A sentence hearing in the SafeWork NSW case will be held at a later date before Judge Wendy Strathee.

— AAP

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## Walking for health

By SHELLEY WARE

Taking time to care about our own mental health and wellbeing has never been so important, as the last few years have taken their toll on everyone. With lockdowns during Covid, the impacts of the failed referendum, the recent election campaign, loss of loved ones, the cost of living and, well, the list is long and it is thick. Through all of this heartache and challenges, the impacts of our mental health is a real challenge. Exercise plays a big role in helping to keep our minds well and Yorta Yorta/Dja Dja Wurrung woman, Robynne Nelson, Managing Director of Mulana Kaalinya Consulting, is taking this very seriously.

Robynne along with six tiddas are walking the 30km Mornington Coastrek walk on Friday 23rd May to raise money for Beyond Blue. Their team are called 'Trekkin Tiddas' who to date have raised over \$4,500 and they are still going.

When I sat down with Robyn and asked her why she was walking the 30km Coastrek walk, the story was too familiar. She has family members who suffer with poor mental health and has lost young ones and family to suicide too.

Heartbreakingly, two of the women walking in her team, have lost three sons to suicide, one mother lost one son and the other mum has lost two sons, a fate you would not wish upon anyone. The courage in their hearts to walk for their sons and educate others is commendable. They will be in my thoughts as they walk together.



Shelley Ware and Dr Nicole Hayes during the Coastrek walk.

Robynne herself comes from a sporting family, her father George Nelson, like mine, ran the Stawell Gift and it was nice to hear her say she remembered my father. She's only known to stay fit and healthy, in fact this has largely informed a lot of the work she does in mental health today.

She walked the Inca Trail in 2018 and was super fit, only to return home to shatter her knee and undergo a metal knee replacement. Robynne said: "It has been one hell of a journey returning to my fitness but I have persisted because I know how important exercise is for our mental and overall wellbeing."

The statistics speak for themselves, you don't need me to list the statistics and speak in deficit language in this article, we already live them. What we do need is awareness, safe spaces and honest conversations with our people, about our people's wellbeing at the forefront of all our minds.

If you need to talk to someone and don't know where to start, you can call the Beyond Blue helpline, it's free and confidential, you can ask for a counsellor or speak to the person who answers your call. So, call 1300 224 636 and speak to someone who will listen, without judgement. This helpline, will also help family members and friends who need to speak to someone, if you are worried about someone you love.

The funds being raised by the Coastrek teams will be supporting the Beyond Blue hotline, so you can call any time day or night and get the help you need in a step towards feeling well again.

I've walked the last two years as a Coastrek Ambassador and sadly I can't walk this year but I fully support Robynne and her team 'Trekkin Tiddas' and their efforts to raise awareness and funds, if you want to support them too, they can be found on the Coastrek website.





Bunurong Elder Uncle Mark Brown showed absolute class as he delivered the Welcome to Country during the Anzac Day dawn service at the Shrine Of Remembrance in Melbourne, Victoria. (AAP Image)

# Cowardly neo-Nazi shamed himself by booing Welcome



THE former Liberal leader Peter Dutton placed himself in the centre of the debate after a small group of

hecklers including self-described neo-Nazi Jacob Hersant disrupted an Anzac dawn service in Melbourne.

Their booing was drowned out by the rest of the crowd who cheered in protest against their disruption. A similar heckling incident also occurred during a service at Perth's Kings Park.

Mr Dutton described Welcome to Country ceremonies as overused, days after Bunurong-Gunditjmara man Uncle Mark Brown was booed and jeered on Anzac Day.

He repeated the criticism in the final days of his failed election campaign, adding that he believed Welcome to Country ceremonies should only happen at very significant events.



Self-described neo-Nazi Jacob Hersant disrupted an Anzac dawn service in Melbourne. (AAP)

When asked whether he would consider Anzac Day significant enough, the opposition leader said: "No".

Alyawarre woman and co-chair of the Uluru Dialogue Pat Anderson AO responded saying a Welcome to Country was not about welcoming people to Australia, rather "it is about welcoming people to our cultures, lands and seas."

"Again, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are used as a political football in an outdated and tired match," she said.

"It is not up to politicians to regulate when and how a Welcome to Country should happen. A Welcome to Country is an ancient act of generosity and peace."

RSL Victoria president Robert Webster said the actions of the small group were "completely disrespectful" to the Aboriginal community, veterans and the spirit of Anzac Day.

Mr Dutton had also slammed Qantas for their "over the top" Acknowledgement of Country broadcasts to passengers, and had previously said he would not display the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags at press conferences if he becomes prime minister.

Meanwhile, Wurundjeri elder Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin was left heartbroken

after a Welcome to Country she had been set to deliver was cancelled at a Melbourne Storm NRL game following the earlier booing incident.

That decision was later reversed, but she said she was too upset to go on.

Aunty Joy, whose father fought in World War I, later said the long-held ceremony had been practised between communities for thousands of years.

"It is a matter of respect," she said.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese described the ceremonies as a mark of respect and said it was up to individual organisations to decide whether to include them at events.

"The disruption of Anzac Day is beyond contempt, and the people responsible must face the full force of the law. This was an act of low cowardice on a day when we honour courage and sacrifice," Albanese said.

— With AAP



Adrian McMaster.

## Farmer guilty of destroying rock formation



A 65-YEAR-OLD Victorian farmer has been convicted over the destruction of an ancient Aboriginal rock formation on his property in 2021.

The ABC reported last Thursday that Adrian McMaster, from Lake Bolac in south-west Victoria, was found guilty by a Ballarat magistrate for breaching the Aboriginal Heritage Act.

In 2021, McMaster used an excavator to remove rocks from a 1,500-year-old, 300-metre-long stone arrangement resembling an eel on his property.

The giant formation is known to Djap Wurrung Traditional Owners as the kuyang ceremonial ground and has been a recognised and registered site of Aboriginal significance since 1975.

McMaster was sentenced with a recorded conviction, a 12-month undertaking for good behaviour and ordered to donate \$7,000 to the Aboriginal Heritage Council for ongoing protection and preservation of the site.

The prosecution also requested McMaster cover more than \$14,000 in court costs, but the final figure is yet to be determined by the court.

The ABC reported that last month in the Ballarat Magistrates' Court, McMaster disputed the charge, telling the court he believed the rocks presented a "safety issue".

The matter was argued on two key points — whether McMaster's actions constituted a "mistake of fact or law" and whether that mistake was "reasonable and honest".

On Thursday, Magistrate Mark Stratmann deemed that although McMaster had made a mistake of fact, his conduct was neither reasonable nor honest.

Mr Stratmann told the court this ruling was based on McMaster's comments that he had seen no Aboriginals in the area, along with his failure to act on repeated warnings that he was interfering with a known Aboriginal heritage site.

The magistrate also referenced McMaster's long association with the Lake Bolac property, his admission there were "Chinese whispers" about cultural heritage on the land and McMaster's ongoing work with a mining industry that routinely dealt with sites of cultural significance.

"He suffered from an absence of knowledge that he did nothing to sharpen," Mr Stratmann said.

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CREATIVE VICTORIA



# Doco details Robbie's fight to highlight genocide

By ALI MC



A NEW documentary recently screened in cinemas detailing the life and political activism of community leader Uncle Robbie Thorpe, Uncle to Senator Lidia Thorpe.

Titled *Our Warrior*, the film documents Uncle Robbie's relentless pursuit of justice in what he often refers to as 'Crime Scene Australia.'

"It's bit of a privilege, actually, I never expected that to happen," he told the *Koori Mail*, reflecting on the documentary being made.

"I'm lucky to have the life that I've had, being involved in a strong Aboriginal community, a strong family, who have got a pretty good understanding of the history since British colonialism, particularly for the Gonnai Kurnai people and the Gunditjara and Djab Wurrung people."

The Krauatungalung (Gunnai) / Djab Wurrung (Gunditjara) activist is known for his fiery speeches and uncompromising stance and is a regular speaker at protests such as Invasion Day. His appearances in court – most recently charging King Charles with the crime of genocide – has also pushed the boundaries of political activism and challenged the legal system directly.

*Our Warrior* looks back at Uncle Robbie's childhood and explores the emergence of his radical politics in the formative years of Black Power in Australia and the activism of 1970s Fitzroy. The film also speaks to his enduring legacy and the impact he has had on younger political activists such as Senator Lidia Thorpe and Meriki Onus, from Warriors of the Aboriginal Resistance.

"My political life started at the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in the very early days," he told the *Koori Mail*. "I learned a lot from the people who were there. I



Uncle Robbie Thorpe. Picture Ali MC

learned a lot from the National Aboriginal and Islander Health Organisation. And I travelled all around the country with my mother and took a lot of that in, hearing the stories from a young age."

In particular, he pays tribute to his mother Aunty Alma Thorpe, who co-established the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service.

"My mother's an activist," he said. "She's the guiding light for me, along with people like the late Dr Bruce McGuinness, Gary Foley, Denis Walker, my older sister, Marge, my grandmother – all strong activists. I grew up amongst that, and I was thinking, 'how can I contribute in some way.'"

Uncle Robbie was involved in establishing Camp Sovereignty during Melbourne's 2006 Commonwealth Games and is also known for his play on words: Crime Scene Australia, the Stolenwealth Games and the Black GST (Genocide to end, Sovereignty acknowledged, Treaty to be made) are examples of his use of language to prove political points.

Most notably, however, Uncle

Robbie has become well-known for his ongoing public education about the Australian genocide.

"Genocide is the most heinous of all known crimes. It's about exterminating the race of people intentionally. That's exactly what's happened in this country, and no one talks about it," he said.

"Some people would say I was the person who put the word genocide into the vernacular in Australia, which is very difficult to do – I was up against my own people. They'd say, 'what are you talking about Rob?' Now it's much more accepted."

He said the influence of his Elders and politically active community members, along with his own research – including reading the United Nations Convention on the Crime of Genocide – drew him to speak prominently about such a serious topic.

"For a long time, the general population didn't realise the gravity of the crime that's been committed here. What do they think happened to the population of the original people here? It's a bit naive to think 'this is an empty

land' – that such a beautiful continent like this was empty," he said. "If it wasn't for the acts of terror and the policies of genocide, Australia wouldn't exist the way it does today."

Uncle Robbie told the *Koori Mail* that educating the broader public about Australia's true history is a vital component towards achieving justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and a large part of what drives him to keep fighting.

"The truth about the history of this country needs to be taught in schools, simple as that. Where's the curriculum around all of this? It would save a lot of racism," he said. "Ultimately, it's all about education and the truth. People aren't so bad once they get to know the truth. I think many more would be on our side. I've really got nothing better to do with my life, other than defending ourselves against the genocide and the destruction of our land and culture. That's what I've committed myself to do."

**More information about *Our Warrior* can be found at [ourwarriordoco.com](http://ourwarriordoco.com)**

## Findings loom on Indigenous teen fatally shot by police



A CORONER will return to the outback to hand down her findings into the death of an Indigenous teenager shot by a police officer during a botched arrest.

Warlpiri-Luritja man Kumanjayi Walker, pictured, died after being shot three times at close range by then-constable Zachary Rolfe during a botched arrest at a home in the Northern Territory community of Yuendumu in November 2019.



In March 2022, an NT Supreme Court jury acquitted Mr Rolfe of murdering the 19-year-old.

NT Coroner Elisabeth Armitage in November closed her long-running inquest to consider more than 5,000 pages of transcripts and 1,990 pages of written submissions.

An NT courts spokesperson said on Thursday that Judge Armitage would deliver her findings on June 10.

Judge Armitage accepted an invitation from the Parumpurru Committee of Yuendumu to deliver her findings in the remote town where she heard some of the evidence.

Counsel assisting Peggy Dwyer previously told the inquest that Mr Rolfe's character should be considered as a direct cause of death.

"Mr Rolfe was a man whose ego was wrapped up in his use of force, and who took pride in and derived a sense of worth from expressing his dominance over others," she said.

"They were generally Aboriginal men and he expressed that dominance with the use of force."

Counsel for Northern Territory Police previously told Judge Armitage "it is absolutely undeniable that Mr Rolfe is a racist" based on his derogatory text messages about Indigenous people.

Mr Rolfe's solicitor Luke Officer told the coroner racism could not be considered under the Coroner's Act, which only permits her to investigate the cause of death.

"There's no need to inquire into whether racism played a part ... there is no direct evidence of that, it has no relevance to cause of death," Mr Officer said.

– AAP



Aboriginal Housing Office



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# Building resilience to deal with natural disasters

By MARION WILLIAMS



YOUTH are big winners from the seventh round of grant funding from Fire to Flourish in the Clarence Valley.

Twelve community-led projects across Bundjalung, Gumbaynggirr and Yaegl Country with a theme of Caring for Country and Youth have shared \$420,000.

Fire to Flourish is a Monash University initiative. It was started after the 2019/20 bushfires to investigate how communities could build resilience to future disasters.

It has an academic-led research arm plus a group of facilitators working on the ground with communities in the Clarence Valley, East Gippsland, Eurobodalla, and Tenterfield. All four areas were hit hard by the bushfires.

The facilitators' job is to meet community members and listen to their ideas for building resilience. They co-design projects with the community to bring those ideas to life. The approach recognises that each community is different, with different needs and priorities.

As Fire to Flourish Community Lead in the Clarence Valley, Cara MacLeod, put it: "You know what works and what doesn't in your community, and your voices can be heard. We are supporting communities with opportunities to collaborate, learn and receive funding to realise their ideas."

Ms MacLeod said foregrounding Aboriginal wisdom is one of Fire to Flourish's guiding principles.

The Caring for Country theme came through strongly in previous rounds of co-design meetings and community engagement. The ideas for the



Fire to Flourish Clarence Valley's Bundjalung co-designers Ken Gordon, Lynette Donnelly, Avery Brown and Joe Walker at Copmanhurst Hall, December 2024. Picture: Courtesy of Fire to Flourish Clarence Valley

12 successful projects came from Aboriginal communities and the broader community, based on their priorities and understanding of Country.

The process included several community forums where people came together, talked, and shared ideas and knowledge.

Ms MacLeod said the decision-making process was very collaborative with three to

five representatives each from Bundjalung, Gumbaynggirr and Yaegl Country.

Several projects involve intergenerational learning.

For example, a project led by contemporary dancer Jade Dewi Tyas Tunggal starts with around six young creatives from across the Clarence Valley listening to cultural knowledge holders including Uncle Fox Laurie

sharing stories on Yaegl Country and Ken Gordon on Bundjalung Country.

The young people will create a concept and song based on the Elders' stories. They will then do a workshop with mentor Blake Rhodes in Grafton to develop the concept and record the song in a recording studio.

In July they will return to Grafton to develop an

accompanying dance with professional dance groups Garimaa Ngari and Angourie Dance. They will perform the dance and make a video of their performance.

"They are all really talented young people who are putting themselves out there, from collaborating on new work to performing and recording which shows great creativity and leadership," Ms MacLeod said.

While the young people will be mentored by professional dancers and music producers, they will determine the direction.

The \$88,800 Connecting to Cultural Country project is being led by Gurehlgam Corporation. It has a Gathering Hub in Grafton and works with a range of other Aboriginal organisations and communities.

This is another intergenerational project because Gurehlgam will be connecting Elders to young people. They will travel to several culturally significant sites, and Elders will share their knowledge.

The project reconnects youth to their culture and community through creative storytelling, yarning sessions, cultural activities and Back to Country days. It includes career advice from facilitators.

One of the several projects with a Caring for Country element is the Maclean Rainforest Reserve Restoration on Yaegl Country. Supported by Nungera Co-operative Society and Yaegl Elders, a Yaegl bush regeneration team is leading this \$68,800 project to restore a rainforest remnant.

"The team will collect seeds and Bluerock Nursery will grow them," Ms MacLeod said. "It is empowering young people, restoring remnant rainforests after bushfires and floods, and respectfully sharing cultural knowledge."



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Labor Senator Malarndirri McCarthy and Labor member for Lingjari, Marion Scrymgour, both have plenty to celebrate after a resounding Labor win.

# And the winners are ...



ANTHONY Albanese has declared a decisive victory in the federal election, with Labor achieving an even larger majority for its second term.

Re-elected Prime Minister Albanese asserts that Australia has made significant progress as he celebrates a substantial Labor landslide victory in the federal election.

Significant shifts towards Labor nationwide have bolstered the party's majority in federal parliament, while the coalition's vote has dropped to near-historic lows.

Labor has secured 88 seats in the 150-member House of Representatives, compared to the coalition's 40, granting the prime minister a stronger mandate for his second term.

Mr Albanese is the first prime minister since John Howard in 2004 to achieve consecutive election victories.

Mr Albanese stated that voters have made a decisive choice.

"Together, we are turning the corner, and together, we will move forward with no one held back and no one left behind," he remarked.

"In this era of global uncertainty, Australians have opted for optimism and determination; Australians have chosen to confront global challenges.

"Australians have cast their votes for a future that aligns with these values, a future founded on what unites us."

Among all the Labor gains, the most notable was the loss of Opposition Leader Peter Dutton's seat in Dickson, Brisbane, which he had held for



Labor member for Robertson Gordon Reid was returned.

24 years.

This marks the first instance of an opposition leader losing their seat in a federal election, with Mr Dutton being defeated by Labor's Ali France.

The coalition is on track for one of its lowest primary vote totals since its formation in the 1940s.

Labor has gained marginal seats such as Leichhardt in Queensland, Bass in Tasmania, Sturt in South Australia, and Deakin in Victoria.

Malarndirri McCarthy is on track to retain her portfolio as Minister for Indigenous Australians.

Ms McCarthy said the stunning victory was a repudiation of the culture wars that had dominated the last week of the campaign.

"Tonight the people of the Northern Territory have joined with all Australians to say we love our country, we do not want to see division in this country especially with our First Nations people," she said.

"And we have been given a mandate tonight to find and persevere through a better way

for all Australians especially the First Nations people of Australia."

With a culture war over Welcomes to Country dominating the final week of the election campaign, Mr Albanese pointedly said an acknowledgement of Country.

"I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet, and I pay my respects to Elders past, present, and emerging – today and every day," he said.

The blame game for the Coalition's loss has already begun.

Shadow Indigenous Australians Minister Jacinta Nampijinpa Price was asked if photos of her in a "Make America Great Again" hat and her use of the phrase "Make Australia Great Again", which made headlines during the campaign, had contributed to the Coalition's defeat.

Senator Price accused the media and Labor of "slinging mud".

"Donald Trump doesn't own those four words," she said.

Labor's key funding announcements made during

the campaign centred on 800 additional jobs for the Indigenous Rangers Program, \$5 million for training in remote essential care services, and funding for two new Headspace services to be launched in remote communities.

The Coalition took policies to the election including a reaffirmed commitment to establish a Royal Commission into allegations of child sex abuse in Indigenous communities.

The pledge for a Royal Commission has been controversial since the idea was first floated in 2023, criticised by dozens of Indigenous organisations as politicising the issue.

Other key promises from the Coalition included an audit of Indigenous Affairs spending and reintroducing compulsory income management via the Cashless Debit Card — a controversial scheme which was abolished under the Labor Government.

Key Voice architect Thomas Mayo has declared that Labor's resounding election victory was a national endorsement of Welcome to Country ceremonies.

The cultural practice became a major issue in the final week of the election campaign after an address by Bunurong Elder Mark Brown at Melbourne's Anzac Day dawn service was drowned out by boos and jeers.

One of those responsible was a neo-Nazi and the ugly scenes were condemned across the political spectrum.

Thomas Mayo, one of the key advocates of the Yes campaign, has claimed that Labor's thumping majority is an overwhelming rejection of

Coalition's criticism of Indigenous recognition and a national endorsement of Welcome to Country ceremonies.

"Tonight, Australia voted No to ignorance and Yes to Acknowledgement; No to xenophobia and Yes to Welcomes; No to regression and Yes to progress," he wrote on X.

In October last year, Mr Mayo insisted constitutional change, like the rejected Voice to Parliament, could still take place down the track.

Wiradjuri man and Labor MP for Robertson, Gordon Reid, has retained his seat on the NSW Central Coast to secure a second term in Parliament.

Dr Reid came into this election as one of two Indigenous MPs recontesting their seats. His Labor colleague Marion Scrymgour was similarly re-elected for a second term for the NT seat of Lingjari.

By late on Saturday night, Dr Reid, a former emergency doctor, had gained an 8.58 per cent, two-candidate-preferred swing, staving off the Liberal challenger Lucy Wicks who had held Robertson from 2013-22.

In the 2022 election, Dr Reid won his first term with a 2.2 per cent margin.

Marion Scrymgour has been re-elected to the NT federal seat of Lingjari with a 6.1 per cent swing to Labor.

Ms Scrymgour, who has links to the Tiwi Islands through her mother and Central Australia through her father, was first elected MP for Lingjari in 2022.

Her previous career as a Territory MP included being the first ever Indigenous Deputy Chief Minister of the NT.

Sources: AAP, NITV, Daily Mail, ABC.





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# Frontier Wars remembered

By ALI MC



AS thousands gathered across the nation to commemorate ANZAC Day, a small group came together at Camp Sovereignty in the heart of Naarm to pay respects to First Nations peoples who died in the Frontier Wars.

As the sun rose over the city, Uncle Robbie Thorpe and Aunty Lisa Thorpe spoke about the importance of remembering ancestors who died defending their lands against colonisation.

Marcia Galea, Chair of the Victorian NAIDOC Committee and the MC of the event, spoke to the *Koori Mail* about the importance of such acknowledgment.

"It's about remembering and recognising that our people died defending our Country within our own soil, and that was upon colonisation," she said.

"Today's ANZAC Day, a national public holiday, and everyone's honouring and remembering the ANZACs that have fallen, fighting and defending our country overseas. We died fighting for our Country here."

Tens of thousands of First Nations peoples were killed in what are now known as the Frontier Wars, with massacres continuing into the 20th century.

Many such massacres were led by police, such as the Coniston massacre in 1928, when around 60 Walpiri people were killed in a series of mass murders near Yuendumu in the Northern Territory.

Along with commemorating Indigenous lives lost in colonisation, Galea told the *Koori Mail* the event was also to remember the Black Diggers who fought for Australia but were discriminated against when they returned.

"Everyone gathered some gum leaves and placed them on the fire for our smoking ceremony; that was to really remember our ancestors and think of our own ANZACs that died defending our country," she said. "Even the ones that did go to fight for war and came back here and couldn't even go to the pub and drink with their mates."

While returned non-Indigenous soldiers were given land grants after World War I, Indigenous soldiers were denied this compensation; in fact, it was Aboriginal land that was given away as part of the 'soldier settlement' packages.

Indigenous veterans were also often refused entry into RSL clubs, a discriminatory practice that occurred until the 1960s. Galea told the *Koori Mail* this history was important for Australians to understand.

"Everyone talks about reconciliation. Us as Aboriginal people, we've got nothing to reconcile with; it's the country that needs to reconcile with us," she said.

"So when we talk about days like today, that's what it's about: the country reconciling with us and speaking the truth and speaking the history of what actually happened in this country."

She also stated that it was vital that both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children understood this history.

"There are kids here today, and it's about sharing that truth in history as a shared knowledge," she said. "We've got to do this for our kids to grow up in a better future. And we need non-Aboriginal people to come and walk beside us in that journey."

Camp Sovereignty originally began as a protest site during the 2006 Commonwealth Games and features a sacred fire and serves as a meeting and ceremonial site. Both Galea and Uncle Robbie Thorpe, along with other supporters, are currently negotiating with the local council to permanently establish this important cultural gathering site as a place of education and healing.

"This is part of our healing. To have this ceremonial fire constantly," she said. "It is a spot for us to be able to come together and heal, to perform ceremony. Once ceremony is taken away from us and we're denied that as a part of our culture, we can't heal, and that this is what heals us, is our fire and being together."



Camp Sovereignty, at the so-called 'Kings Domain' in the Botanical Gardens, Naarm/ Melbourne.



Attendees of the Dawn Ceremony place gum leaves on the sacred fire to remember ancestors who died in the Frontier Wars and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ANZACs.



Nioka Thorpe-Williams, James Williams, Lisa Thorpe, Milloo Williams, Charles Williams Jnr, and Charles Williams.



Marcia Galea, Chair of the Victorian NAIDOC Committee and the MC of the Dawn Ceremony.



Uncle Robbie Thorpe (Krauatungalung/Gunnai/Djapwurrung/Gunditjmara) and Aunty Lisa Thorpe (Gunnai/Gunditjmara), CEO of Bubup Wilam Aboriginal Child and Family Centre, both spoke at the Dawn Service.





A small but supportive crowd turned out to remember the fallen.



Stanley Freeman, Amarnae Oui, Josephine Fourmile and Walubara.



Neville Reynolds headed the organising committee.

## Honouring our first warriors



A SMALL but moving tribute to the warriors who defended their Country during the Frontier Wars was held on Anzac Day eve in Gimuy (Cairns).

Gimuy Walubara Yidinji Elder Neville Reynolds said the event recognised that 'all around Australia there was warfare'.

"Frontier Wars were everywhere and brought about such devastation and trauma to our people – all those words that war is associated with apply to us.

"The First People of this country, who share and call Australia home, have a past predating the Ice Age and dinosaur eras.

"The so-called 'Lucky Country' amplifies no recognition of its Aboriginal inhabitants' sovereignty, which was never ceded or surrendered.

"Frontier Wars impacted all

Australia's tribal nations who suffered enormous losses – Elders, parents, children and babies – were murdered and lost to us forever.

"That's the history of it, it was our wooden shields and spears against their weapons.

"To look at Gimuy and its beautiful environment today, you could almost not realise the chaos and damage brought about by these events.

"And yet our ongoing social and emotional well-being, our trauma was brought about by what happened only a few generations ago.

"The importance of presenting the Frontier Wars in a public space to educate the public about this history is not only beneficial for any person who sees or hears it, it also allows for healing."

Last year, Australian War Memorial chair Kim Beazley called for First Nations "guerilla campaigns" of the Frontier Wars to be included in the Australian War Memorial.



Henry Fourmile of Cairns with Percy Neale of Yarrabah caught up at the gathering.



# Warriors remembered

By ALF WILSON



ANZAC Day on Thursday Island was a big event commencing with a dawn service, followed by a street match and a memorial event at Anzac Park.

Command Warrant Officer Glen Wright and Leading Seaman (LS) Roneld Baragud, who represented the Royal Australian Navy and HMAS Cairns attended an emotional Anzac Day Dawn Service at Green Hill Fort precinct overlooking the sea.

Also there were Australian Army Reserve soldiers from Sarpeye (Charlie) Company within 51st Battalion, Far North Queensland Regiment.

A Waiben warrior was at the dawn service along with TSRA Chairman George Nona and TSRSC Mayor Elsie Nona.

The march commenced at 8.30am at the old post office building and was followed by the service at Anzac Memorial Park.

Hundreds participated in both to remember and honour those who served and fell during conflicts. During World War II the Torres Strait was at Australia's front line when a Japanese invasion was feared.

The 880 members of the famous Torres Strait Light Infantry Battalion (TSLIB) were ready to defend against any invasion.

Sadly all of the heroes who were in the TSLIB have passed away.

LS Baragud is from Yam (Iama) Island and grew up amongst a sea-faring family.

"My family are sea-going people. My great-great-grandfather, great-grandfather and grandfather were fishermen. We grew up around the sea, it was the main way to make money," he said.

LS Baragud remembers Navy crew visiting Iama when he was just a child.

He enlisted at age 18 and has never looked back and has travelled to many foreign places including the Middle East.

But he loves returning to his beloved Torres Strait.



Command Warrant Officer Glen Wright, left, and Leading Seaman Roneld Baragud, right, with TSRA Chairman George Nona and TSRSC Mayor Elsie Seriat and soldiers at the dawn service.



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# in moving ceremonies

By ALF WILSON



FIRST Nations men, women and children were part of huge Anzac Day celebrations in Townsville which is renowned as a garrison city.

Townsville has the huge Lavarack Army Barracks as well as a RAAF base and both have yarnning circles where Indigenous personnel can gather.

Adults, youths and children aged as young as seven marched

along the scenic Townsville Strand.

Their family members and friends were amongst an estimated 30,000 people who watched and clapped them from the footpath.

The march included serving soldiers, veterans, students from 30 primary and high schools, military and SES trucks and many other groups.

Some are boarders at local colleges and have homes at various Indigenous communities, One of the youngest students

was seven-year-old Eli Edoni-Cantrell who carried the Mundingburra State School flag in what was his first Anzac Day march.

What was pleasing was that many of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who participated were young Indigenous boys, girls and youths.

The *Koori Mail* was there and saw about 50 marchers who celebrated the Torres Strait Light Infantry Battalion (TSLIB) which defended the top end in World War 11.

Between 1942-45 a total of 880 members of the TSLIB defended the Torres Strait as a Japanese invasion was feared.

All of the heroes are now deceased and are still remembered.

Aircrafts woman Olive-Rose Pearson who is based at Newcastle in NSW held the lead banner.

Close behind were Patrick Neliman and William Blanco jnr who were at each end of a bigger banner.

The TSLIB marchers were

cheered as they walked along.

Elders had earlier been picked up in a bus and driven to a marquee beside the Strand from where they could see the event.

TSLIB working committee co-ordinator Therese Cowley said after the march people gathered at the Army Museum Jezzine Barracks Precinct for singing and light lunch.

An earlier dawn service at Anzac Park had a large number of participants. Across town at Thuringowa a march and family day was well attended.



Aircraftswoman Olive-Rose Pearson held the lead banner for the Torres Strait Light Infantry Battalion.



A warrior between Warrant Officer Glen Wright (left) and Leading Seaman Ronel Baragud at the dawn service on Thursday Island.



Indigenous soldiers were amongst marchers.

## ANZAC Day event held on Palm Island



ANZAC Day on the north Queensland Aboriginal shire of Palm Island was a solemn event where the many locals who had served in the military were honoured.

It started with a 'Lest We Forget' dawn service at 6am and was later followed by a Community barbecue breakfast at the PCYC at 8.30am.

A morning service commenced with a street march from the police station to the Anzac Memorial where the service started at the Cenotaph at 10am.

Wreaths were placed there by adults, children from Bwgcolman State and St Michael's Catholic Schools, and police.

The Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Australian flags were raised.

Morning tea was provided after the event at the council chambers.

The names of all Palm Islanders who have served in the military are inscribed on a monument.

Elders were picked up by bus and driven to the event.

Between 1pm and 5pm an Anzac Memorial was held at the Coolgaree Bar and Grill and it was attended by many.

Anzac portraits and a history exhibit proved popular at the bistro.

Games of two up were enjoyed by many is what is an annual tradition on Anzac Day.

Some Palm Islanders living on the mainland took part in Anzac Day events in Townsville and at Ingham.



Military helicopters fly above the Townsville parade.



# Traditional Owners blast Rio Tinto's record on reforms



RIO Tinto pledged to reform its business practices after it blew up the 46,000-year-old Juukan Gorge rock shelters in Western Australia in 2020 for an iron ore mine.

The event sparked public outrage and led to a government inquiry and the exit of the company's chair and chief executive.

At Rio Tinto's Perth annual general meeting last week, Deanne McGowan of the Robe River Kuruma Aboriginal Corporation said the group had failed to update its agreement with Traditional Owners of the lands containing Mesa J mine, where it had mined for 30 years.

"You have paid us for three years," Ms McGowan said, adding the mine had been excluded from an agreement 20 years before when Rio Tinto had told Elders it planned to close it.

"And here we're now ... 17 years of payments that Rio has cheated us at Mesa J."

The lands belonging to the Robe River Kuruma group do not include Juukan Gorge but are in the same Pilbara region in Western Australia.

"Our Country is dying," Ms McGowan said.

"Our culture and our heritage at Middle Robe lies in ruins."

Ms McGowan criticised the seven gigalitres of water the miner took for its



Rio Tinto came under intense criticism for destroying Juukan Gorge in the Pilbara region of Western Australia in 2020.

coastal operations each year.

"Rio Tinto's past is our present and until you remedy your past, it stains our future together," said.

Rio Tinto chair Dominic Barton said his company was committed to reaching a new

agreement and resolve issues with the Traditional Owners.

"We've had a number of conversations and we'll be having after this meeting as well, but there is a very, very strong commitment to work through these issues

with you," Mr Barton said.

"We acknowledge and recognise that this mining activity ... has been having a severe impact on water and we are very committed to trying to be able to help rectify and improve that."

The company had invested \$395 million in a desalination plant that would be operational in 2026, the chair said.

Also at the meeting, shareholders rejected a review to consider unifying the company's dual listings on stock exchanges in London and Sydney.

Hedge fund Palliser Capital had lobbied shareholders to keep only the group's spot on the ASX, claiming the dual listing had eroded \$US50 billion (\$A78 billion) in company value.

"It is never easy for a small shareholder to take on the likes of a corporate giant like Rio Tinto," Palliser founder and chief investment officer James Smith said.

"However, we simply could not accept Rio Tinto's anomalous and illogical findings that unification offers no advantages whatsoever, when almost every other DLC in the world has unlocked multiple significant benefits through a simplified structure."

Rio Tinto PLC, the group's UK-incorporated entity, is also traded as an American depositary receipt (ADR) security on the New York Stock Exchange.

AAP, with Reuters



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# Trey's business promotes Da Mob

By JILLIAN MUNDY



IF you're visiting a Sunday market in the East Gippsland area of Victoria expect a warm welcome from Da Mob – one you can take away with you.

Da Mob 3875 is a deadly clothing line by young Gunaikurnai, Monero and Yorta Yorta man Trey Baxter.

His t-shirts, hoodies, track suits, mugs, can holders, drink bottles, travel mugs and key chains are emblazoned with designs showcasing turtles, ducks, handprints, colours of the Aboriginal flag, Da Mob 3875 branding and other designs.

"It explains stuff about where we come from, they are my totems – the black duck and the long neck turtles," Trey told the *Koori Mail*. The 3875 is the Bairnsdale postcode.

Trey started his business 18 months ago, supported by his family and support worker Camryn Griffiths from Mosaic Elite Health who he refers to as 'my G'.

Trey digitally designs all the artwork for the products himself. And when he's not working on his business you're likely to find



Da Mob clothing line owner/operator Trey Baxter and with his 'G' Camryn Griffiths at the Bairnsdale Market.

him fishing, writing, hip hop dancing including freestyling and teaching, working in Mosaic's Beyond Limits all abilities cafe or making his upcoming podcast.

"I'm thinking about making

my own book [too], about my history, about my life," he said.

He also loves bringing awareness and encouraging all young Indigenous people with a disability to chase their dreams

and representing that there is nothing that people with Down Syndrome cannot do, constantly breaking down barriers and shattering stereotypes.

Da Mob 3875 are at the

Bairnsdale Market, held on the 4th Sunday of each month and the Lakes Entrance Market held the first Sunday of each month – most market days you can also catch Trey playing didge and clap sticks at his stall.

When the *Koori Mail* called into the Bairnsdale's Rotary Club Howitt Park, Da Mob 3875 near the market's entry was a hub of activity and greetings from Trey, his dad Albert Baxter and Camryn.

"We know everyone from Bairnsdale and Lakes," Trey explained – and the *Koori Mail* has no doubt they do!

This month Trey is setting up a store at 52 Myer Street, Lakes Entrance, with Mosaic Elite Health to sell Da Mob 3875 products.

You can also connect with him to purchase products through Da Mob 3875 Facebook page.

The page suggests you should support Trey to amplify Indigenous voices, empower young people with disabilities, preserve Indigenous heritage, promote cultural awareness, support a local Indigenous business and 'look good, feel good, do good and be part of something special'.

# Celebrating our mothers



IT'S not a secret that in First Nations communities our mothers, aunties, sisters and nanas are the 'glue' that

holds our families and clan groups together.

This Mother's Day there are opportunities to show some love with gifts from First Nations outlets.

For gift ideas from the Tiwi Islands in the Northern Territory you can shop at Murrup – [www.murrup.org.au](http://www.murrup.org.au) – which is a not-for-profit Aboriginal community controlled organisation that partners with four remote communities on community development.

At Sydney Harbour there will be a 'Damulay Ngurgang Mother's Day' – with local Elder Jacqui Jarrett leading yarns, yoga and workshops at Barangoo Reserve from 9.30am to 12pm

[www.barangoo.com/whats-on/events/damulay-ngurgang](http://www.barangoo.com/whats-on/events/damulay-ngurgang)

Also in Sydney on May 11 from 10am to 4pm will be the Blak Markets at The Rocks, featuring handcrafted gifts from

20 local and regional First Nations stalls. Key highlights include: Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony.

The Blak Markets will kick off with a traditional Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony (10.30am); Free weaving, dance and ochre workshops – There will be free interactive weaving workshops (10.30am – 3.30pm), and a kids dance and ochre workshop (12.00pm); Dance performances by Gawura Cultural Immersions – 11.00am, 1.30pm [www.therocks.com/whats-on/campaigns/blak-markets-at-the-rocks](http://www.therocks.com/whats-on/campaigns/blak-markets-at-the-rocks)

For gift ideas from the Torres Strait Islands, Athe Threads, is a First Nations fashion brand known for blending contemporary streetwear with cultural meaning, reflecting the unique stories and identity of Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait), featuring bold prints, including the Hamiso line and a new Gelzal collection, a response to strong demand from female customers, For stockist enquiries contact the Gab Titui Cultural Centre team via

[CAHTeam@tsra.gov.au](mailto:CAHTeam@tsra.gov.au) or contact 07 4069 0888.

After more than a decade in women's health, Gamilaroi woman Darinka Ondrovic has launched a new range of antenatal journals to support women during pregnancy.

Ms Ondrovic, who was born and raised on Wiradjuri Country in Dubbo, NSW, said the journals offer a space for cultural connection, emotional reflection, and strength.

Each page includes culturally safe guidance, wellbeing prompts, and artwork reflecting the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

Ms Ondrovic said the journals were developed to support women during an important time in their lives. "Our women deserve to feel seen, heard, and supported during such a sacred time," she said. "These journals are created to walk beside them, honouring culture and tradition while supporting health and wellbeing" – the first print run is available [www.theawakeningjourney.com.au](http://www.theawakeningjourney.com.au)

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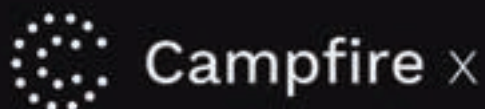


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**Cultural Fire Practitioner**  
(As shared by Uncle Paul Gordon)



# Maclean Mob win Elders Olympics in their first outing

By KRIS FLANDERS



OVER the moon and totally unexpected. That's how everyone involved with Maclean

Elders Group, Biirrinba Coastal Emus, described the emotions of winning the 2025 NSW Elders Olympic Games held recently in Inverell in the north-western region of the state.

To make things even more astounding for those involved, this was the very first time that the Elders from Maclean, north coast of NSW, had competed in the event.

Aunty Noeline Kapeen is 68-year-old, and said it was an amazing effort by all the participants.

"We actually went out there to have fun, so to win was a bonus, we were gobsmacked to hear that we won. We didn't know what to say, we definitely screamed when we were announced as winners. Still can't believe it," Aunty Noeline recalled.

"We had a wonderful squad which consisted of those who really wanted to compete, plus there were others who came along to support and help us on the day. It was totally a team effort."

Aunty Noeline and the other Maclean Elders had always heard great things about the Elders Olympic Games and they made 2025 their year to get out of their homes and town to compete.

## Hurdles

It almost didn't happen with a few hurdles along the way which didn't leave much time for the squad to do training in the lead up to the Games.

"There were Elders who always talked about it and wanted to go, they approached me and said it would be nice to go out. So we went for it, I obtained some funding and held meetings with the Elders group. We only had two months leading into it and before we knew it we were on the road to Inverell," Aunty Noeline said.

"Mudyala Aboriginal Corporation loaned us two 8-seater buses which cut down costs and the other challenge was that accommodations were all booked out in town, nothing was available. So we looked at Air B'n'B's and we were lucky enough to secure three of those to accommodate the team."

With events like pass-the-ball, quoits, the bean bag toss, netball hoop shooting and the time-honoured egg-and-spoon team race, there are games that challenge the competitors which bring out their best.

Throughout the day the Maclean Elders excelled at most



The Maclean Elders Group, Biirrinba Coastal Emus, celebrate their win.



Steve Kelly concentrates on his balance.



Lynette Randall throws the ball.

of the events and accumulated enough points to claim a famous victory.

"Upon first look it seemed most of the games were pretty simple, but some of them were tough and we just tried our best at everything. We wanted to be a part of all the things that came our way, they never stopped trying. Plus we never stopped smiling and laughing and just being present in the events," Aunty Noeline said.

"To get together for a very happy occasion was good for us all. To see other Elders connect with people we knew and meet new people and make new friendships is something

beautiful."

Making the overall victory even sweeter was that the Biirrinba Coastal Emus also took out the prize for 'Best Banner' at the Games. Every team that participates designs their very own banner that represents their area and tells people exactly where they're from.

## Cherry on top

Aunty Noeline says it was the extra special cherry on top to take home that prize also.

"Aunty Lenore Parker is our oldest competitor and her daughter Frances is a local artist and she designed the uniforms which was also then made into

our banner. The design is about our coastal emus and Biirrinba is our Clarence River which is present on our shirts and banner. We couldn't believe that we also won that prize too," Aunty Noeline said.

"I'd say to other Elders out there, get a team together like we did and get amongst it. The Elders Games makes you stronger, mentally and physically, it's a big cultural event. It's a wonderful social gathering too."

The town of Maclean, set on the mighty Clarence River and not far from some of the best beaches of the far-north coast of NSW, is excited to host the NSW

Elders Olympic Games in 2026.

Aunty Noeline says the Maclean elders are already looking ahead and will be doing their best to make it a huge success and memorable for everyone who travels there to Bundjalung land.

"Everyone is on a high. We are going to start planning and getting the logistics sorted, have meetings with the local Clarence Valley Council, funding bodies for grants, sponsorships and venues. We can't wait to host it, a huge thing for us, a big thing for all the Elders here and the community as well. We will also involve the Maclean youth, this will be for everyone," she said.



# Men charged over major kava seizure in remote community



A HUGE haul of kava has been seized in a remote community where police have arrested and charged two men with supplying the intoxicant.

The seizure of 235kg of the alcohol substitute was made last Tuesday at Galiwinku on Elcho Island, 550km northeast of Darwin, following reports kava was being distributed in the area.

More than \$15,400 in cash was also seized and two men, aged 28 and 35, were arrested following a police search of a property.

The pair have been charged with possessing and supplying a commercial amount of kava and were remanded in custody after appearing at Darwin Local Court last Thursday.

Under the Northern Territory's Kava Management Act, the maximum penalty for supplying a commercial quantity of kava is up to eight years in prison.

Kava, an extract from the root of a pepper plant found on Pacific Islands, was introduced to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in northern

Australia in the early 1980s as a substitute for alcohol.

It has traditionally been cultivated by Pacific Islanders for use as a social and ceremonial drink, either ground or chewed up and mixed with water or coconut milk.

The effects of kava include muscle relaxation, sleepiness and feelings of wellbeing.

The Department of Health's Office of Drug Control says on its website that incoming passengers can bring up to 4kg of kava powder into most of Australia for personal use, but this is not allowed in the NT.

The latest kava seizure was not the largest in the territory but was significant for mitigating impacts within the community, NT Police said in a statement.

The illegal distribution of regulated substances harmed the health of community members and exploited them financially, a spokesperson said.

"The NT Police Force remains committed to disrupting the supply of kava and holding offenders accountable."

— AAP



Two men have been charged after police seized more than 200kg of kava in a remote community as well as more than \$15,000 cash in a property search.



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## Danny Eastwood's view



## Quote



**“Genocide is the most heinous of all known crimes. It's about exterminating the race of people intentionally. That's exactly what's happened in this country, and no one talks about it”**

– Uncle Robbie Thorpe

● See page 6

# Unquote

# Lest we forget the Frontier Wars

As the country commemorated the lives lost in multiple theatres of war since the Boer War this ANZAC Day, most Australians would not be even aware that many battles were fiercely fought on this continent. One side wanted to open up the country's natural resources and would use any means necessary to do so, and the other side fought to maintain cultural obligations to the land that they were born on – the same soil their ancestors over countless generations were born on.

Australia was not ‘settled’, it was forcibly colonised by the British Empire as it competed globally with other colonial European powers to set up economic spheres of influence, maintained by military might.

This land grab was underpinned by a world view that the Old World was synonymous with ‘civilisation’ and the New World was inhabited by ‘savages’, and that it was Christian duty to forcibly convert First Nations peoples during this process.

Countless First Nations warriors and communities across the country were decimated by Old World diseases that Mob had no immunity to better technology through muskets and swords, and the use of horses for transport across long distances.

Last year, Australian War Memorial chair Kim Beazley called for First Nations “guerilla campaigns” of the Frontier Wars to be included in the Australian War Memorial.

The recognition of ‘counter attacks on Country’ by First Nations in defence of land and sea estates is increasing in Australia.



In this edition we cover a Frontier War commemoration in Cairns in Far North Queensland and the thoughts of Gimuy Walubara Yidinji Elder Neville Reys.

“Frontier Wars impacted all Australia's Tribal Nations who suffered enormous losses – Elders, parents, children and babies – were murdered and lost to us forever.

“That's the history of it – it was our wooden shields and spears against their weapons.”

The annual commemoration is also an opportunity to remember the sacrifice of all First Nations combatants across all military operations, since the Frontier Wars.

It should never be forgotten that First Nations peoples were prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice for a country that didn't recognise them as a people, and often returned from overseas duty to face racism, despite their service.

Approximately 1,000 Indigenous Australians served in World War I, despite the White Australia policy and the Defence Act that was interpreted as prohibiting non-European-heritage men from serving.

Of the one million Australians who served in Australia and overseas during World War II, it is estimated that up to 3,000, perhaps more, were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## A YARN WITH...



## Colleen Mack

Arrernte, Alice Springs, NT

- Favourite bush tucker?**  
It would have to be kangaroo tail.
- Favourite other food?**  
Pork spare ribs and rice.
- Favourite drink?**  
Diet Coke.
- Favourite music?**  
Mostly Country artists.
- Favourite sport?**  
Softball, football and basketball.
- Favourite holiday destination?**  
I would love to visit Canada.
- What are you watching on TV?**  
Watching crime investigations on Youtube.
- What do you like in life?**  
My amazing children and grandchildren.
- What don't you like in life?**  
That our cultural Elders are not being treated as equals.
- Which Black or Indigenous person would you most like to meet?**  
Any Indigenous successful person who makes a difference and is a role model for our younger generation
- Which people would you invite for a night around the campfire?**  
My children and grandchildren.
- Who or what inspires you?**  
From learning and doing tour guiding for my traditional homelands of our local tourism attraction, Standley Chasm (Angkerle Atwatye).
- What is your ultimate goal?**  
To live a healthier lifestyle so I can spend more time with my kids.



# Traditional language keeps the fire in Fred's belly burning

By MARION WILLIAMS

SOMETHING magical happened when Butchulla Songman Fred Leone met celebrated Walbunja Monaro artist Cheryl Davison.

In 2024 Mr Leone had a one-week artist residency at Four Winds, a music organisation on Djiringanj Country.

As part of the residency, he worked with Ms Davison and the Djinama Yilaga Choir, the intergenerational Yuin choir she founded.

Ms Davison is using the choir to revitalise the Dhurga language through song.

Most of the choir members started with very little knowledge of Dhurga. By June 2024, five years on from their formation in 2019, they had written every song in their repertoire except one.

"I am passionate about my language and song and making it accessible to the next generation," Mr Leone said. "When I saw that passion reflected in their community, I put my hand up to come and work with them."

## Fred Leone's journey

Mr Leone is one of the Butchulla Songmen with Aboriginal, Tonga and South Sea Islander roots. He comes from the Garrwa and Butchulla tribes.

As a Songman he is one of the custodians of the traditional songs of the Butchulla tribe and one of a handful of keepers and custodians of their language.

"When people think of me as a Songman they think it is everything I learnt traditionally but this was a process over 40 years," he said. "It is our generation that is the fruit of the labour of the generation before us."

Much of the credit must go to his Auntie Jeanie Bell who became a linguist almost 40 years ago.

She started an Indigenous languages class at Charles Darwin University in Darwin. The degree is still offered today.

In his late teens, Mr Leone was speaking with his mother about songs. She told him that the songs he was talking about were from Cherbourg Mission. "She said you're interested in this stuff. I know you know a few old songs. You'd be interested in this."

It was a Butchulla dictionary that Auntie Jeanie had been instrumental in creating.

"That was the beginning of my obsession with language," Mr Leone said. "I was already obsessed with music."

He could see the impact that the work of people like his Auntie was having on the community in Hervey Bay on Butchulla Country.

"My generation was the first to benefit from the work put into language revitalisation," Mr Leone said. "We can speak and



Butchulla Songman Fred Leone. Picture: Honey Atkinson.

understand Butchulla language."

## Cheryl Davison's journey

Ms Davison is well known as a visual artist. The National Gallery of Australia, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, and the National Museum of Australia have acquired some of her works.

The choir began as part of a project that came out of the National Museum of Australia's Cultural Connections initiative. Four Winds received funding through that project and employed Ms Davison as Aboriginal creative producer.

"With no musical background, the first thing I did was start a community choir," Ms Davison said. They sang covers of songs they liked ranging from hits and Christine Anu's songs to gospel. Then someone suggested they sang in language.

The rest is history. They

performed at the Australian Consulate in the US in July 2024. A year earlier they sang in Poland at the invitation of the Ngairi Polish Exchange.

In Australia they have performed at Parliament House, Canberra International Music Festival and Big Sing in the Desert.

## New musical genre

While working with Ms Davison and the choir during his Four Winds residency he saw that it is music that is having the greatest impact on revitalising language in her community, like many others.

"Even though there is no one in the community with a Linguistics degree, what they are doing is having a huge impact on language revitalisation, so I saw a lot of similarities with Mob up and down the coast," he said.

He said their use of music as

a vehicle for language revitalisation is a very smart move and it comes naturally



Walbunja Monaro artist Cheryl Davison, with members of the Djinama Choir. Picture: Elise Idiens.

because singing has always been part of Indigenous culture.

Musically, he is also impressed by what they are doing.

"How many classical choirs sing in language? Only a handful," Mr Leone said.

"They work with a guitarist, so their original format is folk-style songs but once you get the orchestra or quartet, they become a whole new genre of music."

## Joined Four Winds board

Because of the connection he felt with what they were doing to breathe life back into their language, he wanted to come back to the region and work with them.

Four Winds could see the connection too and appointed him a board member in April.

Four Winds executive director Leigh Small said Mr Leone's commitment to cultural preservation and innovation would strengthen Four Winds' ongoing work to honour and amplify First Nations voices through music.

Mr Leone said Four Winds works closely with the Yuin Mob, so he is bringing his 28 years' expertise to the community, as well as to the board.

He said revitalising language is an uphill battle because English is so dominant due to the ongoing trauma of colonisation.

Thanks to the work of people like Mr Leone and his Auntie, it is second nature for far more young people in his community to express themselves in language than when he was a kid.

"Wherever I see language being pushed forward and strengthened from within the community, that puts fire in my belly to keep doing what I am doing, using radio, music, acting, NITV and the performing arts as a tool for language revitalisation and teaching young people," Mr Leone said.

"That is where my focus is, so I am passionate about the future of our languages."



# Showcase of young artists



UMI Arts in Cairns will showcase the distinct and diverse talent and storytelling of Far North Queensland's young and emerging First Nations artists in its second exhibition for 2025, *Culture Through Our Eyes*, opening to the public on Friday, May 9.

Featuring the work of 19 talented young artists from Djarragun College, St Mary's Catholic College and Trinity Bay High School, *Culture Through*

*Our Eyes* encompasses an impressive collection of 31 works in various mediums including acrylic on canvas, lino print works on fabric and paper and photography, all of which are uniquely inspired by the artists' homelands, culture, and experience.

UMI is a Creole word that means 'You and Me' and reflects the gallery's mission to keep culture strong.

Operating since 2005, UMI Arts mission is to operate a cultural organisation that assists First Nations people to participate

in the maintenance, preservation and protection of culture.

Depicting their culture and stories from homelands that extend as far north as Cape York and Torres Strait Islands, Cairns and surrounding communities, the young artists in the exhibition include:

## From Djarragun

**College:** Holly DOUGLAS (Townsville, Charters Towers, Mackay), Sharntel EVANS (Borroola, NT), Peter LEVI (Moa Island), Olivia POOTCHEMUNKA (Wik, Aurukun), Tarek TURNER (Laremba, NT) and Irene WOOLLA (Wik,

Aurukun).

## From St Mary's Catholic

**College:** Jahzara MICHL (Kokoberrin, Cape York Peninsula) and Yaromir MICHL (Kokoberrin, Cape York Peninsula).

## From Trinity Bay State High

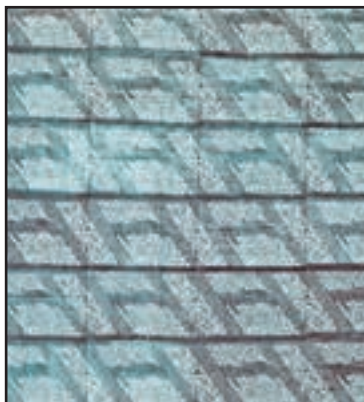
**School:** Rashaela ANAU (Koei, Moegi Buai, Torres Strait), Chalesa CURNOW (Bamaga, NPA, Saibai), Limiah MCGREGOR-YEATMAN (Koa, Kullili, Jarrawa), Sarah NIKI (Ugar, Saibai), Jahnesta NONA (Kaurareg Thabu Augud clan of Saibai, Marawadai), Ziva

OSBORNE JAMES (Saibai Koedel & Avth Koedel), Tassiana RIORDAN (Gudang Dhoeybaw, Torres Strait), Rumantha SODERBERG, Alaina TYSON-McLEAN (Kuku Yalanji and Gudjala/Charters Towers), Jaydyn VACULKA (Muundhi Warra, Kaurareg, Torres Strait) and Hellen WARUSAM (Koei, Dhoeybaw, Torres Strait).

*Culture Through Our Eyes* will open with a Smoking Ceremony, from 6pm on Friday, 9 May 2025, at UMI Arts Gallery, Shop 1, 4 Jensen Street, Manoora in Cairns.



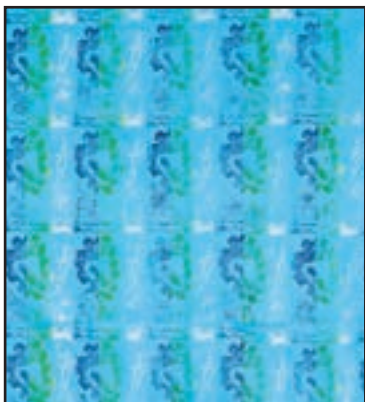
Alaina Tyson-McLean  
*Camping and Totems (above).*



Chalesa Curnow  
*Ait Koedal Connection (above).*



Hellen Warusma  
*The Blue (above).*



Sarah Niki  
*Ugar and Me (above).*

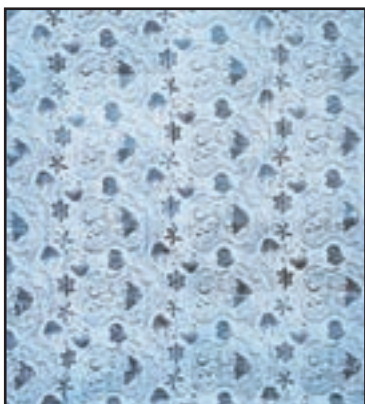


Tassiana Riordan  
*Navigate The Stars (above).*



The exhibition will run until 4 June 2025 with most of the works for sale.

All photographs by Colyn Huber, Lovegreen Photography.



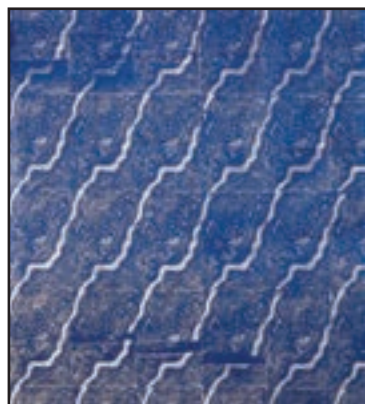
Jahnesta Nona  
*Carefree and Freedom (above).*



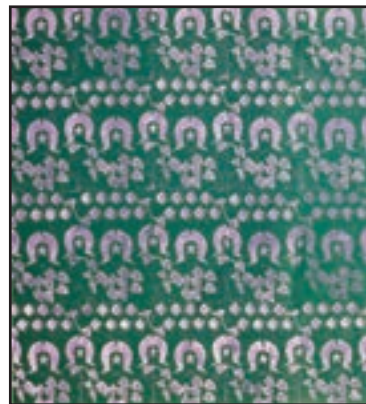
Rumantha Soderberg  
*Ancestor Mask (above).*



Jaydyn Vaculka  
*Coming Together (above).*



Limiah McGregor-Yeatman  
*Willie Wagtail Whispers (above).*



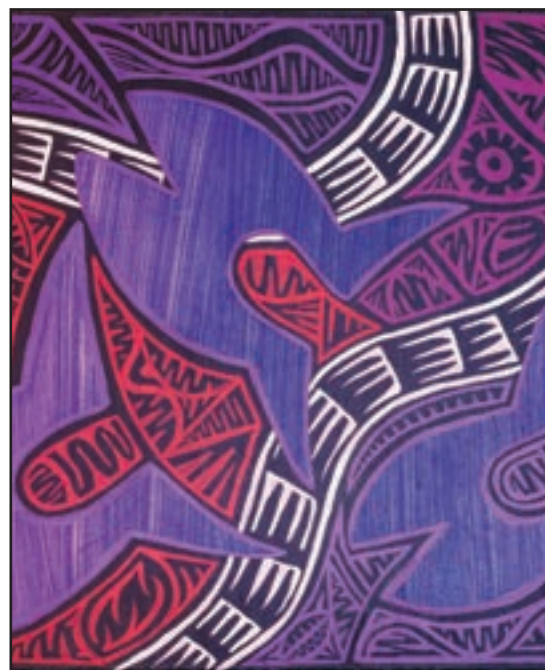
Rashaela Anau  
*Keeping Culture Alive (above).*



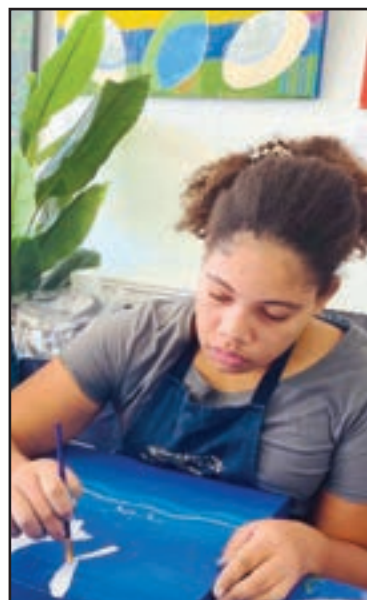




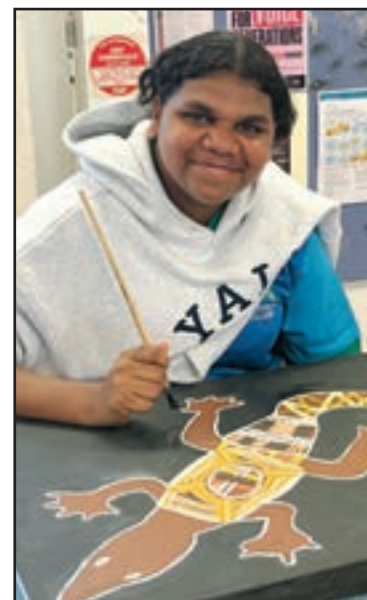
Olivia Pootchemunka  
*In the Waterhole (left).*



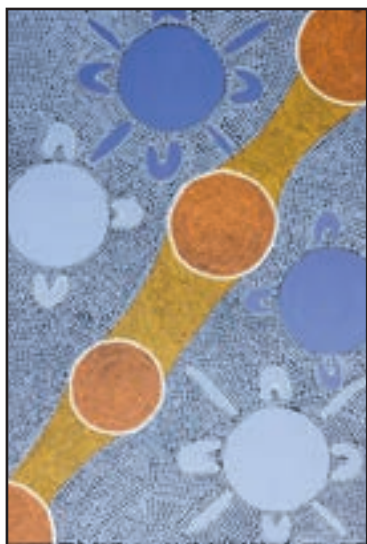
Peter Levi  
*The Three Warriors (left).*



Jahzara Michl  
*Bush Food (left).*



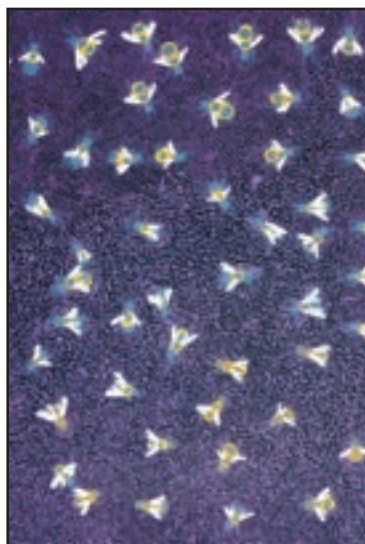
Irene Wolla  
*Hunting Goanna (left).*



Sharntel Evans  
*My Country II (above).*



Tarek Turner  
*Camp Site (above).*



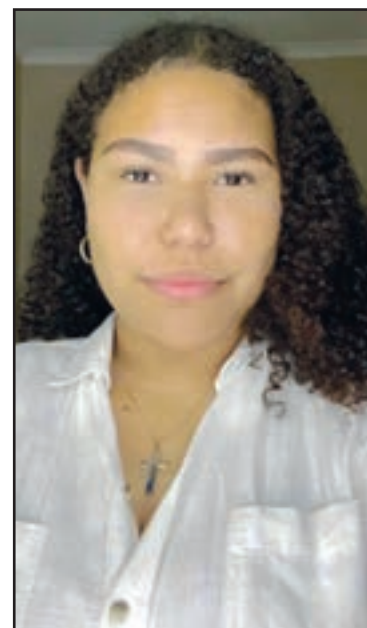
Holly Douglas  
*Big Bees (above).*



Yaromir Michl  
*Black Cockatoo (above).*



Ziva Osborne James - *Culture is what a culture grows (above).*





# Grace in the face of torment

**B**EFORE this election, messages from white supremacist parties such as Trumpet of Patriots kept blowing up my phone with texts saying "You don't need to be welcomed to your own country". I was left with a sense of defeat. Will this country ever really grow, mature, take accountability, understand on a larger scale that the current colonial capitalist system we live under is a system that thrives on the death of our planet and people?

Will we embark on empowering and caring for the three per cent of people who are a part of the longest living culture on the planet? Will we destroy a system that makes policies for the majority, always leaving the minorities at risk? I heard people crying out about which politician to vote for or which political party to get behind, but at the end of the day weren't we really just voting in business people to continue to run our country as a business, placing money making and GDP as the highest priority when it comes to leading?

I might sound crazy to some people, but honestly it seems crazy to me that we can destroy our waterways for money, that we can use chemicals that kill our



**Ella Noah Bancroft**

fertile soil for money, that we pay for food and medicine (things that Country gives freely to us and only ask that we care for her in return for the magic she offers). I think it's crazy that money has the power to make you do something you would never do.

I wish we could stop to hear the cries of the birds, the way we have killed so many living beings in need, for our own greed. I wish that we could take most sci-fi films as a warning of what's to come if we do not course correct. But it doesn't seem to work, we still continue to oil the cogs of the machine and the machine, no matter how many "new parts" you put in, it is still the same machine, making the same thing, just with different or new parts.

That is how I see the government, all the politicians are "new parts" or "different coloured parts" of the same machine that produces the same thing. What this machine produces is inequality, extraction, greed, accumulation, ego and individualism, no matter who is in power.

I dream of a world where we support and pour our energy not into making money but rather where we make memories, gardens, connections and care for those who need us most. I was thinking the other day that, imagine if we had as much passion for the planet as we do our 9 to 5 jobs? What a different world we would live in. Imagine if our local communities became our work colleagues, our offices became gardens and our rivers became clean once more?

Imagine if we remembered that our jobs and money is not what we need to survive but the actual planet that provides everything we need? Look around your home, everything inside has come from Country, everything, even your body.

I think, these white supremacists have missed the point completely, we're not welcoming you to one country,

Australia, to us there are many Countries on this continent some call Australia. Secondly, "your country" is not yours, you will die and it will remain and Country owns us, not the other way around.

Many of our ancestors kept this country clean and fertile for thousands and thousands of years before the illegal occupation arrived, and if that makes you feel uncomfortable then good, a bit of uncomfortability might make you think, but actually what we see is that it just makes people boo.

How depressing that in a time when we need to stand together more and more that there are people, parties and communities who want to keep us divided. When you boo our people, you recut a wound that is 237 years deep, one that slowly heals over time and is recut again. When you boo our people and cultural customs, we are all reminded of how disrespected our families, communities and selves have been walking in a world that continues to undervalue our culture and the lore that lives in the land and in our blood.

When we hear your boos, we will rise, we don't let that cut keep us down, the blood pours down our bodies, like the tears pour

down our faces but you with never cut us too much to keep us down, we are strong in blood and strong in spirit and your boos sound like cries from a child who has never known initiation, connection and belonging but longs to feel that. I hear your boos as a cry for your own disconnect, not mine.

Uncle Mark Brown, a proud Gunditjmara man, held his composure and grace on the 25th of April during a dawn Anzac ceremony.

While some audience members booed him, he held strong, he held his head high with pride despite this, and he showed us how to be graceful in the face of immaturity.

This week I want to celebrate him, his courage, his care, his knowledge and his strength, for he is the star in the night sky when all other stars are gone and he among many of our leaders, Elders and fighters are why our wound doesn't cut too deep. They give us the strength to keep going, they encourage us and at the end of the day, no boo can take away any of our blood connection and spirit connection to Country.

**Ella Noah Bancroft is a Bundjalung woman and regular *Koori Mail* contributor.**

## Election night thrills, Monday morning bills

**I** have a confession: I almost cast a donkey vote at last weekend's federal elections. I was tempted to draw a smiley face on the ballot paper, not turn up, and just cop the \$20 penalty. I'm not alone in feeling disillusioned with politics, not just here but globally. But then I remembered and was reminded by others: as Indigenous Australians, our right to vote was hard-won.

Election night delivered many undeniable thrills: Peter Dutton lost his seat. After 24 years in Parliament, the Opposition Leader was spectacularly ousted in a result confirmed barely two hours after polls closed. This wasn't just a defeat. It was a clean-out.

Returning Prime Minister and Labor leader Anthony Albanese cruised back into power with a landslide. When the music stopped, the Greens, One Nation, and the Trumpet of Patriots were left standing around like stunned mullets – no chairs, no mandates, and certainly no ministerial dreams for Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price, who's now free to keep focussing on making Australia great again from the backbench.

Dutton, who demanded "detail" during the Voice referendum, never offered any of his own. His leadership and campaign thrived on fear and culture wars. The Coalition wrongly assumed their ugly "No" playbook would work again. It didn't. His ANZAC Day swipe at Welcome to



**Adam C Lees**

Country showed how out of step he'd become. By night's end, social media was flooded with reactions, commentary, and finger-pointing.

I'm not shedding tears for Dutton. This is the same bloke who boycotted the National Apology to the Stolen Generations in 2008, a gesture that spoke volumes. As Fred Chaney wrote in *Being Whitefella* (1994), there are too many mingy buggers in Australian politics, people who lack generosity, empathy and the ability to lead with heart. The phrase still resonates for me. For all their talk of unity, the Coalition under Dutton did more than their share to divide the nation in some of the most mean-spirited and negative ways.

If this election proved anything, it's that copycat politics doesn't work. It

stifles imagination. Less stinginess and a lot less minginess would serve the Coalition well if they want to become a more palatable option for voters.

But let's also not pretend that voting Australians just had a great awakening by re-electing Labor. The same attitudes that fuel division didn't disappear; they were simply edged out by cost-of-living angst and voter fatigue. No moral epiphany happened at the polling booth. For those claiming Australia rejected division, race-based politics, or Trumpism, it's time to wake-up. The electorate didn't reject those ideologies so much as the incompetence and lack of credible alternatives behind them. With global chaos and local economic pain, most voters stuck with what they knew. Labor played it safe, and it paid off.

The biggest surprise of the night for me though was the Greens wipeout; I'll admit it, I was selfishly pleased. Yes, they play a role in holding others to account and spotlighting issues that matter. But when it comes to offering a credible path forward, they consistently fall short. The Greens oppose almost every major development, especially coal or gas. That might win applause in inner-city forums, but it doesn't cut it with voters who want to know how they'll pay their bills or keep jobs in their towns.

It's one thing to chain yourself to a bulldozer or

glue your hands to a road; it's another to lead, to balance a national budget and develop effective policies that will govern our lives and standard of living. The Greens' refusal to budge on certain developments and their habit of saying "no" to any less-than-perfect development can make them look like the party of permanent opposition.

What can we expect from Albanese 2.0?

Any Mob expecting miraculous, earth-shattering change from a re-elected Albanese government will be sorely disappointed. Voters who believed a second-term Labor government might pick up where the Uluru Statement left off have seen little follow-through. Since the Voice referendum failed, most talk of Treaty and Truth has all but disappeared.

Instead, Labor has leaned into what it calls "practical action", which means more training programs, boosts to Indigenous procurement, and funding for health and education. These are laudable efforts, but they're not new. It's a return to the "practical reconciliation" approach from the Howard era: invest in services, avoid structural reform, and steer clear of anything too progressive or bold that might scare the electorate.

Since ANZAC Day, people have burned endless social media energy arguing over

Welcome to Country. All that noise and not a single real-world problem solved. Ceremony debates won't fix housing, lower prices or close any gaps. You can't eat a flag, and a Welcome to Country won't fix the fact that our people are still dying younger, living poorer, and getting locked up more often. Only four out of nineteen Closing the Gap targets are on track. That's not getting ahead. It's going nowhere slowly. Politicians can talk about practical change all they like, but the fundamentals still aren't shifting.

And after the destruction at Juukan Gorge, there was momentum and seemingly an appetite for meaningful reform. The Morrison Government's inquiry recommended an overhaul of outdated laws like the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act. The Graeme Samuel review of the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act in 2020 laid a clear roadmap: stronger national standards, greater Indigenous involvement, and better protection for the Country. It was practical and well-received.

Nearly five years later, we are still waiting. The Albanese Government has reiterated its commitment, but we have seen more consultation than legislation so far. There has been progress in intent and engagement, but not in law. For those who hoped this next term would bring

sharper action on cultural heritage, that ambition remains parked – if not stalled.

I watched Saturday's election unfold from seat 7C on the last flight out of Brisbane to Perth. As the hours passed and election news trickled in mid-flight, my mind had already wandered. I've long stopped expecting the government to change my life. They're not going to pay my bills or lighten my tax return. The inflight entertainment seemed more gripping by then. I wondered why QANTAS insists on serving rock-hard mango-flavoured ice creams and whether the crew secretly enjoyed watching us passengers nearly lose a tooth.

Then I thought about my week ahead: paying bills, meeting deadlines, and the usual hustle of being a consultant. Then I caught a headline about a woman in Greece who blew herself up trying to rob a bank. It barely registered. Once, that kind of chaos would have dominated headlines. Now, it's just another flicker in the feed. Politics feels like that too. Loud. Confused. Often ending in a self-inflicted mess.

On Monday, the sun came up, and life rolled on.

**Adam C Lees is a Yadhaigana (Cape York), Meriam man, and Director of New Moon Consulting. He has over twenty years of global experience in the resources and energy sector.**



# Community-led responses are best to deal with youth suicide



**Tanja Hirvonen**

The devastating loss of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth to suicide is a complex and multifactorial issue which demands urgent attention and action. Tragically, our youth, (some as young as 15 and even younger), have died by suicide, ranging from those experiencing tremendous social disadvantage to those seemingly on a positive path with opportunities. This stark contrast underscores the multifaceted nature of this crisis, where no one is immune to the pain and challenges which contribute to these tragic outcomes.

Suicide among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth is more than just a matter of numbers. Gaja Kerry Charlton, Traditional Owner and Yuggera Elder, shared, "it is a heartbreaking tragedy that devastates families and communities. We are also losing future generations." The causes of suicide are complex and influenced by various psychological, social, cultural, and historical factors. These young lives are lost far too early, and we must closely examine not only the factors contributing to this crisis in the youths themselves but also the systems which affect their lives. Gaja Kerry Charlton believes colonisation and the systems Aboriginal peoples have had to face can lead to pain and feelings of deep exhaustion. She said, "the core issue is pain, and that pain can be too much to bear for one person to deal with alone. We need supports and services that not only provide emotionally safe areas to support people in this pain but also encourage building resilience and strength."

## Comprehensive data is needed

While there is a need for comprehensive data to better understand why young people are taking their own lives, the solutions come from within communities themselves. According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the rates of suicide are approximately two and a half times higher for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples compared to other Australians.

Culturally led responses lead to long-term healing and wellbeing; when culture is central,



**Jane Kearns, Tanya Robinson, Jasmine Williams and Kim Reid at the healing walk in Wagga Wagga.**

hope grows. To support this, we need data that goes beyond risk – capturing our protective factors like cultural identity, connection to Country, and holistic healing systems which reflect the strengths of our social and emotional wellbeing. Professor Pat Dudgeon said, "our centre is committed to promoting best practices that respect Indigenous knowledge and self-determination." The Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention at UWA promotes self-determination for First Nations communities to design, implement and evaluate programs themselves.

## A complex issue

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth encounter unique challenges which increase their vulnerability to mental health issues and suicide, including the ongoing impacts of colonisation, intergenerational trauma, systemic discrimination, and disconnection from culture and Country. When a child loses a parent to suicide, the risk of suicide for that child rises significantly. Likewise, parents who lose a child to suicide often experience a profound decline in their own wellbeing.

Thirrili is the national provider for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postvention support and assistance, led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing. Dr Summer May Finlay, Yorta Yorta woman and Chair of Thirrili, said, "in many cases, Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander families are not only affected by suicide once but multiple times. The heartbreaking reality is that more and more families are facing the loss of several loved ones to suicide".

This intergenerational cycle of grief and loss can foster a sense of hopelessness which leads to further harm.

Each anniversary – the first birthday, Christmas, or another significant moment without a loved one – can feel unbearable, and the absence is a constant reminder of the loss.

## Supporting families

"For those who have lost a loved one to suicide, the journey of grief is complex and ongoing. It involves not only mourning the loss but also learning to live without the loved one who has passed," Dr Finlay said.

The most helpful supports can be practical assistance, open conversation, compassion and understanding.

Services and resources developed by Mob to support Mob are the most effective and appropriate. Thirrili, for example, supports families and communities on their healing journeys and remembers those who we have lost to suicide.

A powerful example of a community coming together to heal is the "Murra Yarra (Speak Out Speak Loud)" healing walk in the community of Wagga Wagga. This walk serves as an opportunity to honour and commemorate loved ones lost to

suicide, remembering them in the way they were when they were with us. The healing walk provides a space for family and community members to connect, grieve, heal, and find support. Jasmine Williams, a co-founder of Yamandhu Marang (Are you well?), Wagga Wagga's founding First Nations youth suicide prevention community action group, hosts the walk with the support of the local Aboriginal Medical Service and other wellbeing services.

Programs like Culture Care Connect – delivered by the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) – also play a pivotal role by providing integrated suicide prevention and aftercare services in local communities.

"The walk is our way to bring the community together as one, to walk alongside our sacred healing space along our river, to commemorate our loved ones, and to give space to talk about what we loved about them," Jasmine said, "walks like this can help people process their grief, find strength, and continue the journey of healing; this year's walk is the third annual of its kind with non-First Nations people reaching out to the group wanting to honour the memory of their lost loved one and celebrate their lives with us. That just shows the reach of the walk now; we all need to heal, and this is a subject we need to keep talking about."

## A call to action

"We must continue to have conversations about the losses in

our communities, but more importantly, turn those conversations into meaningful action. This includes improving the data on Indigenous youth suicide, understanding shared responsibility and addressing the factors which increase the risks of suicide. It is crucial we strengthen cultural support, community connection and education around wellbeing to work toward reducing the alarming rates of suicide within our communities."

Gaja Kerry Charlton shares, "we cannot afford to remain silent. The pain of losing our young people is too great, and the need for action is urgent. Let us honour those who have been lost by committing to making a difference in the lives of those still with us."

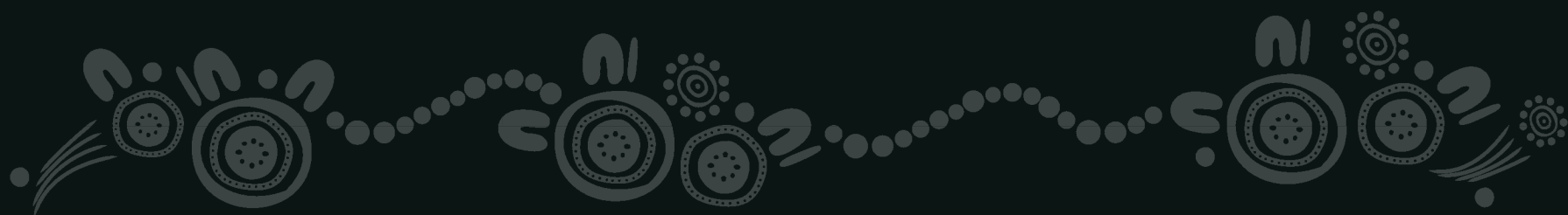
**Tanja Hirvonen is a proud Jaru and Bunuba woman – born and raised on the lands of the Kalkadoon people – Mount Isa, Queensland. Tanja is the interim CEO of Thirrili and is a clinical psychologist and mid-career researcher with expertise in mental health, social and emotional wellbeing, suicide prevention, and working with persons impacted by trauma. She brings academic research, corporate expertise, and clinical experience working with remote, regional communities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being, and doing, to her board roles at the Australian Indigenous Psychologist Association and the Black Dog Institute.**



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# Dr Darryl Murgha – honouring a Far North Qld cultural pioneer

By MICHAEL WARREN



WITH a heart rooted deep in Country and a lifetime dedicated to cultural education and community

empowerment, Gunggandji Elder, Traditional Owner and Gurriny Yealamucka Health Services Cultural heritage specialist Dr Darryl Murgha has reflected, four years later, on gaining an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters by James Cook University, Townsville campus.

It's a prestigious distinction recognising his extraordinary service to cultural heritage, Indigenous enterprise and intergenerational knowledge-sharing.

For over 40 years, Dr Murgha has walked between two worlds: blending the strength of lived cultural experience with formal academic and professional achievement.

A revered cultural leader, archaeologist, and educator, he has spent his life safeguarding the heritage of Far North Queensland's First Nations peoples – while mentoring, guiding, and inspiring generations to come.

## A journey grounded in Country and culture

Born and raised in Yarrabah, Dr Murgha's early love for history and heritage led him to pursue a Bachelor of Arts in Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Queensland.

Since graduating in 1985, he has forged a path that has seen him take on roles as diverse as Native Title Field Officer, Museum Researcher, Archaeology Ranger, Artefacts Manager, and Cultural Mentor.

He is perhaps best known for his leadership in cultural heritage assessments along the Peninsula Development Road, where he not only led archaeological fieldwork but also trained and empowered others – ensuring that Traditional Owner voices remained central to major development decisions.

But Dr Murgha's impact extends far beyond the dig site. A founding figure in the creation of key Indigenous-led organisations – including the Gunggandji Aboriginal Corporation, Djunbunji Ltd. Land and Sea Program, and Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation – he has worked tirelessly to strengthen community control over cultural and environmental stewardship.

"I can honestly say being awarded the honorary doctorate in April 2021 still remains one of the highlights of my career," Dr Murgha reflected.

"It was such an honour back then to be acknowledged for the different ways I've contributed to



Gunggandji Elder, Traditional Owner and Gurriny Yealamucka Health Services Cultural heritage specialist Dr Darryl Murgha.

the community in the Far North and to this day I remain proud and humbled by this recognition."

This honorary doctorate celebrates not just a career, but a lifetime of service, wisdom and deep cultural pride.

## Recognising a legacy of wisdom and service

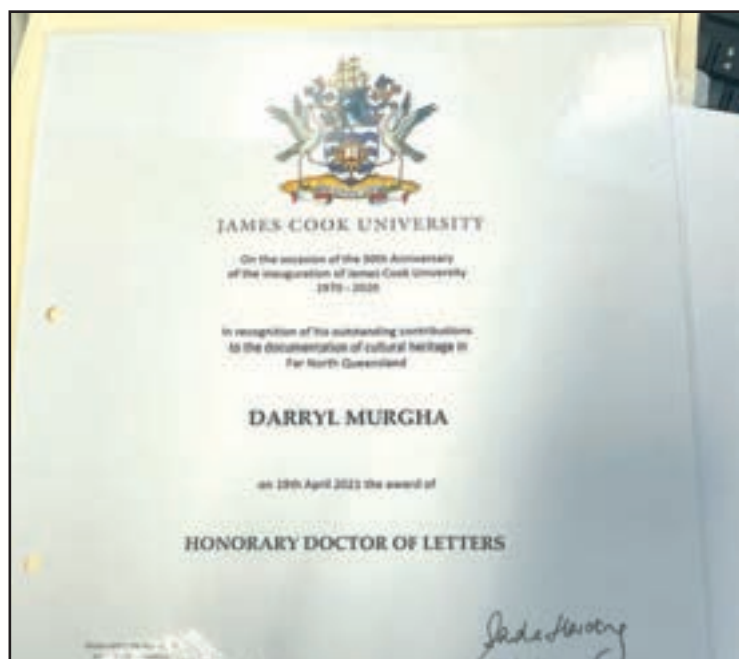
James Cook University's honorary doctorate isn't just a nod to academic or professional achievement - it's a celebration of what it truly means to lead with culture, to live with integrity, and to give back with purpose.

"Dr Murgha's life work has helped shape the way cultural heritage is understood, respected, and protected—not just here in Yarrabah, but across Queensland and beyond," a current GYHSAC colleague remarked.

"He brings people together, shares knowledge freely and leads with quiet strength. He's an Elder in every sense of the word."

Dr Murgha's voice is respected on international stages too. He represented Australia at the Pacific Islands World Heritage Workshop in 2008 and back in 1988, he helped shape the Australia Pavilion at World Expo in Brisbane – welcoming visitors with cultural displays and Acknowledgements of Country long before it became standard practice.

At home, he remains deeply



Dr Darryl Murgha's certificate.

engaged in community life. He's spent over 30 years volunteering in schools and community groups from Brisbane to Cape York and has served on numerous advisory bodies for parks, tourism and the arts.

While earning an Honorary Doctorate remains one of Dr Darryl Murgha's proudest achievements, another memory – involving a pink bus and an unexpected TV gig – stands out as one of the most unforgettable chapters in his remarkable life.

Back in the early 2000s, Dr Murgha received a curious phone call from a Japanese

television station.

"At first, I thought it was a prank," he laughed. "But a few minutes in, I realised it was real – and I couldn't quite believe what I was being asked."

Out of the blue, Dr Murgha had been invited to join the wildly popular Japanese reality show *Ainori* – a quirky, heartwarming travel series where a group of young people tour the world together in search of love. Broadcast in over 80 countries, the show had a cult following.

His role? driver, guide, cultural ambassador – and unofficial love coach – as he

accompanied the pink love bus across Australia, showcasing local culture while helping the cast explore life, love and laughter.

"We kicked off in Hobart and made our way through Melbourne, Sydney, regional New South Wales – all around the country," Dr Murgha recalled. "It was such a fun, joyful experience and a real once-in-a-lifetime journey."

It's just one of many surprising chapters in Dr Murgha's life – a testament to his open heart, adventurous spirit, and willingness to embrace the unexpected.

## Culture at the heart of health

Through his cultural consultancy Deadly Cultural Heritage Services Dr Murgha continues to weave tradition into the everyday workings of health, wellbeing, and care in his community.

Whether it's welcoming newborn babies with ceremony, or guiding frontline GYHSAC staff through cultural mentoring, his work reminds us that health is about more than medicine – it's about identity, belonging, and connection to Country.

From ancient stories to modern programs, Dr Murgha's legacy is living proof that cultural knowledge is not just something to be preserved – it's something to be practised, shared, and celebrated.



# Generation apart but graduating together



THE joint graduation of proud Wiradjuri woman Karen (Marlowe) Coe and her 21-year-old grandson Isaiah Church from Charles Sturt University-CSU Wagga Wagga last month was a fitting occasion on many levels.

The pair's joint graduation symbolises this year's NAIDOC Week's theme 'The Next Generation: Strength, Vision & Legacy'.

Last year, they both completed the Graduate Certificate Course in Wiradjuri Language Culture and Heritage.

Karen decided to do this course because she wanted to speak her Wiradjuri language fluently.

Raised on her mum's (Winnie Marlowe) Country at Brungle Mission until she was 12 years of age, Karen shares an unbreakable bond with Isaiah which started the day he was born.

She enjoys reading books and is currently writing a journal of a lifetime. Isaiah gifted her with a beautiful book, and Karen is now taking this new opportunity to write her story to empower younger generations, especially her seven grandchildren.

She has very strong links with her dad's (Eric Marlowe) Bundjalung Country from Cabbage Tree Island. Interestingly, the word 'buraay' or 'boori' has the same meaning in the Wiradjuri and Bundjalung languages.

Karen says she was very proud

and thankful to Isaiah for doing this course with her.

She said she was personally honoured to watch Isaiah and many other students grow in confidence as they presented their views and knowledge around their Wiradjuri Mob.

The cultural connection was invaluable. Instilling in other students about 'truth telling' she says was significant, which would "continue to empower our younger generations".

In Karen's opinion, "the concepts of cultural protocols will be used in an appropriate manner. There are many people who are lost in their cultural identity. They are misrepresenting our Mob in society today."

She said she was very proud and thankful to Isaiah for doing the course with her.

Karen says Isaiah will always be her inspiration and they are team.

"I can talk under water with a mouthful of marbles and he has the most amazing technological skills," she said.

Isaiah was born and raised in Canberra and has lived there his whole life.

He was raised by his Wiradjuri family on his mum's (Bianca Coe) side, and he is Barkindji from his father's side.

His mother's lineage connects him to the cultural hotspots of Tumut and Brungle where his nan and her family grew up on a mission, whilst his father's cultural lineage comes from Wilcannia.

Isaiah started the course fresh after graduating year 12 and didn't have a job throughout his studying. A lot of his experience came from involvement and management of Aboriginal ideas and activities throughout school.

His artwork is currently on display at Belconnen High School where he painted a learning circle on carpet.

He said it was a pretty special experience doing the university course with his nan, as she was "intent on being able to speak our language fluently".

Isaiah knows that he would not have been able to get through it if she wasn't doing it along with him. It meant a lot to him, he says, learning new things with nan who inspired him to love learning in the first place.

They both agree the atmosphere during the intensives was always bright and fun and Isaiah says it felt like everyone was a friend he had known his whole life.

Throughout the course Isaiah said he enjoyed learning more about government regulations, policies, history and about the experiences of other students.

He is a beginner musician and as such is tackling performance anxiety. He loves a wide array of musical styles and says his favourite band is the Warumpi Band.

Tragically in 2023 Karen's daughter and Isaiahs's mother Bianca passed away, but despite the hardship and the heartache the two motivated each other to complete the course.



Wiradjuri woman Karen (Marlowe) Coe and her 21-year-old grandson Isaiah Church.



# Protect your mob

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# Florrie's food business is a real family affair

By ALF WILSON



A NEW takeaway food business in Townsville's main street which provides traditional food for First Nations people has been busy since it opened in mid April.

Flo's Torres Strait Island Takeaway has the TS and Aboriginal flags proudly printed above the business name outside the front door.

It is a genuine family affair run by Florrie Schwartz, her partner Stephen Tom, with help from their children Joyce, aged 15, Airen, 12, Sonja, 10, Rhonda, eight, and Stephanie.

They are assisted and mentored by Florrie's mother Naianga Mabo who for many years has been a renowned cook of traditional tasty food.

Whilst the business specialises in Torres Strait Islander traditional food, it also serves up Aboriginal dishes.

Some of the favourite foods of customers are seafood boils with sauce, coconut curry chicken, pig blood and others.

When the *Koori Mail* walked into the front door just after 4pm on April 24, the aroma of the food was tantalising.

"We have been busy since opening and have a continual flow of customers. Lots of Elders come in here as well and the children help after school," Florrie said.

Opening hours are from noon until 8pm daily with extended late night hours on the weekend to cater for foot traffic from hungry nearby night club patrons.

As I was snapping pics Thursday Island man Nawia Nomoa walked in to pick up some food.

"It smells delicious and it is good to have a place like this," Nawia said.

Naianga said the business was a "dream" of Florrie who is an excellent cook.

"I love this as I get to be with my daughter and grandchildren and see all



Family matriarch Naianga Mabo, front, with grandchildren Sonja, Joyce, Rhonda, Airen with their mum Florrie between them.

the people who come in," Naianga said.

The family was hard at work doing preparation for an influx of Indigenous customers who would be attending an event at the local military museum.

## Ideal location

Aboriginal customers are well catered for at the business which is in an ideal location.

"When the Palm island ferry arrives in Ross Creek not far from here many of the passengers walk past heading for the CBD and come in and pick up some

food," Florrie said.

Florrie also will cater for the numerous visitors to Townsville for Cowboys home games at Queensland Country Bank Stadium which is about 1.5km away.

Many people from around North Queensland and the islands and NPA visit Townsville to cheer the Cowboys on.

For the convenience of patrons who want to dine in, there is a comfortable sitting area towards the back of the shop. There are toilets in the upstairs section which Florrie will soon open up as an eatery with views of the creek and

Flinders Street.

A friendly atmosphere is another major attraction at this business where all First Nations people can enjoy food like they have at home.

Some of the customers in the first few weeks have also been non Indigenous.

Florrie's sister Annie Schwartz said it was hoped that this successful endeavour would encourage other First Nations people to start up small businesses.

As the business grows, Florrie will look at employing First Nations workers.



Thursday Island man Nawia Nomoa was a customer.



Florrie Schwartz and partner Stephen Tom with a dish.



# Teho returns as a judge for art award



TEHO Ropeyarn has forged his place in the Australian arts scene, earning recognition as an accomplished artist, influential curator and in 2025, as the Artistic Director for the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) and Principal Judge for the prestigious Gab Titui Indigenous Art Award.

Teho holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the College of Fine Arts (COFA). He has collaborated with more than 100 artists and curated over 30 exhibitions, with his own works showcased nationally and internationally, including the 23rd Biennale of Sydney, Nuit Blanche in Canada and the Queen Sonja Print Award in Norway. His works are also part of significant collections, such as the National Gallery of Australia and the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art.

Although his arts career has been monumental, he recalls entering the 2009 Gab Titui Indigenous Art Award as a pivotal moment in his early career.

"I remember my first submission Ikambala into the Gab Titui Indigenous Art Award," Mr Ropeyarn

said. "I was still a student at COFA at the time and I created an oil painting of a crocodile as part of an assessment, so I decided to enter it into the award that year.

"I was very nervous, so I can imagine many artists completing their works for this year's Award would be feeling that as well," he said.

Sixteen years later, Teho returns as Gab Titui Indigenous Art Award Principal Judge with a breadth of knowledge and artistic achievement. In terms of what he is looking for in submissions, he has encouraged artists at all levels to participate for the experience of entering a nationally recognised award.

"Through the award, we get to see a lot of emerging artists coming through the ranks. And that's a positive thing to see, as that is the passing on of inspiration, knowledge and culture and that is how it continues," Mr Ropeyarn said.

"I'm eager to see culture and traditional cultural practices echoed in pieces that tell powerful stories across various mediums.

"The calibre of artists in the Torres Strait will produce some astonishing pieces and we see it all the time

when they present at the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair," he said.

Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) Chairperson George Nona said he welcomed Teho's wealth of knowledge and keen eye for visual artistic expression in his role as Principal Judge.

"Teho is a well experienced and highly regarded creative in the Australian arts industry and a respected member of the community," Mr Nona said.

"We value his participation in the judging process, as his unique artistic vision will allow him to identify the cultural significance and attention to detail that each artist presents in their work."

Teho will serve as Principal Judge alongside two cultural advisors.

The 2025 Gab Titui Indigenous Art Award will be held on Thursday 12 June on Waiben (Thursday Island), Queensland.

**For more information about the Gab Titui Indigenous Art Award contact Leitha Assan, Exhibitions and Public Programs Manager, Gab Titui Cultural Centre at [leitha.assan@tsra.gov.au](mailto:leitha.assan@tsra.gov.au) or 07 4069 0888.**



Gab Titui Indigenous Art Award principal judge, Teho Ropeyarn. Photo credit: Ben Searcy

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# Seven Sisters songlines come to life in the Pilbara



THE ancient Seven Sisters songlines will come vividly to life in the Pilbara when two landmark events take place as part of the Red Earth Arts Festival (REAF) in Western Australia later this month.

The Seven Sisters songlines are among the most significant creation stories in Aboriginal Australian culture, tracing the journey of seven sisters as they evade a relentless pursuer.

Their story is imprinted on the landscape and reflected in the night sky as the Pleiades star cluster, with many believing its origins lie in Murujuga.

The Bungaliyarra Munggu – First Lights Drone Show will take off from Hearson Cove (Murujuga) and recreate this ancient story in the night sky. While the Mayalarri Exhibition will take place safely here on the ground at the Karratha Tourism and Visitor Centre.

Both events will provide audiences with an immersive experience of Yindjibarndi and Ngarluma storytelling, blending traditional knowledge with contemporary artistic and technological expression.

Yindjibarndi Elder and Juluwarlu Artist Judith Coppin remembers when she was growing up on the Old Reserve, “We used to sit around the campfire, and the Old People would tell us about the Bungaliyarra story,” she said.

Juluwarlu Artist and Yawuru-Bardi Ngarluma-Yindjibarndi woman June (Moonie) Djiagween said, “I’m excited about the exhibition and the drone show and its remembrance of a beautiful lady, Nana Tootsie, and the Seven Sisters.”

Ngarluma/Yindjibarndi sisters Kaylene and Regina Daniel said their late mother, T. Daniel, a senior Yindjibarndi Elder and powerful cultural leader, would be there in spirit when the Bungaliyarra Munggu drone show rises into the sky.

“Our late mum advocated hard for the rock art at Murujuga. She told us the stories that were connected to the Seven Sisters from the Burrup to Roebourne. You can see the Seven Sisters in a rock art engraving in the Burrup; it’s like a star reflection. Seeing this story as a drone show at that sacred site will be very special and important, and I know she will be there in spirit,” said Kaylene.

Forming the closing ceremony of REAF 2025, this is the first time the Seven Sisters story has been presented at its place of origin in Murujuga through a large-scale drone and light show.

This free community event will transform the night sky into a moving canvas, using cutting-



First Lights drone show.



The late T. Daniel, a senior Yindjibarndi Elder and powerful cultural leader.

edge technology to share one of the world’s oldest continuous stories.

According to the story, Minkala, the Great Spirit, lifted the Mayalarri (Seven Sisters) into the sparkling night sky. Then came Marrga, singing the Burndud (sacred creation song). Their voices were so powerful that two of the Mayalarri were drawn back from the sky into the sea near Murujuga. They became the Bungaliyarra.

The Mayalarri exhibition at the Karratha Tourism and Visitor Centre will offer visitors the chance to engage with the ancient Seven Sisters stories through paintings, projections, and interactive elements.

This high-quality exhibition will activate Juluwarlu’s renowned archive, bringing together historical and contemporary interpretations of Yindjibarndi cultural heritage, as well as paying tribute to the late Mrs T Daniel who was a major

advocate and powerful leader for Yindjibarndi and Ngarluma culture, land and language.

Designed for both local audiences and visitors, the exhibition will offer an enriching cultural experience throughout the 2025 tourist season.

Together, these events mark a significant moment for the Pilbara – celebrating and sharing the enduring legacy of Aboriginal storytelling through art, innovation, and community engagement.

The First Lights Drone Show will take place from 6-8pm with the show beginning at 7pm on Sunday, May 18 at Hearson’s Cove at Murujuga National Park. Admission is free but tickets are essential. To register go to: <https://mayalarri.com.au>

The Mayalarri Exhibition-Celebrating 25 Years of Juluwarlu will open from 11am-1pm on Saturday, May 17 at the Karratha Tourism and Visitor Centre, Lot 4548 De Witt Rd, Karratha. Admission is free. To register go to <https://mayalarri.com.au>

Celebrating 25 years in 2025, Juluwarlu Group Aboriginal Corporation is an award-winning, internationally recognised organisation dedicated to sustaining, preserving, and promoting Yindjibarndi culture.

At its heart lies a commitment to sharing First Nations knowledge through innovative projects, art, and storytelling, connecting communities to the rich history and traditions of the Yindjibarndi people.

Juluwarlu’s nationally recognised archive has played a pivotal role in preserving cultural materials and advancing Indigenous knowledge systems.

Its extensive work has also supported landmark



June (Moonie) Djiagween.

achievements, including the historic Exclusive Native Title case Yindjibarndi vs Fortescue Metals Group in the High Court of Australia.

Juluwarlu continues to lead transformative cultural initiatives that honour the voices of Elders while inspiring new generations to connect with Yindjibarndi law, Country, and art on Yindjibarndi Country, across the Pilbara, and beyond.



Artist Judith Coppin. Her artwork, *The Mayalarri* is below.



Sisters Regina and Kaylene Daniel.





Curator Kent Morris with Palawa artist Thelma Beeton.

# Artists inside prisons keep The Torch burning

By ALI MC



THE Torch arts program has partnered with the Heide Museum of Modern Art to present a new exhibition, *Blak In-Justice: Incarceration and Resilience*.

Featuring a range of classic and contemporary art from acclaimed First Nations artists, the exhibition addresses the ongoing injustice of hyper-incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The exhibition also delves into the lived experiences of the artists, including those who are part of the unique and self-determined Torch program.

In 2024, the incarceration rate of First Nations peoples rose to its highest ever, with 36 percent of the prison population being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is this ongoing injustice the exhibition confronts.

Curator Kent Morris, a Barkindji artist, curator and Creative Director of The Torch,

told the *Koori Mail* the aim of *Blak In-Justice: Incarceration and Resilience* was to educate people but to ask questions of the audience as well.

"When you walk in there, it's a very powerful presence of our people, and that we are people; we're not just statistics," he said. "We're on the on the receiving end of this bias and discrimination, this embedded, systemic oppression. It has been 237 years, but we're doing what we can. We ask the question of the audience: what are you doing and how?"

Morris told the *Koori Mail* he'd had the idea for this kind of exhibition for many years.

"There's so many powerful works made by leading First Nations artists around this issue of hyper incarceration," he said.

"But they've never been shown all collectively together. We're talking about works from the 70s right through to today, from many different language groups, ages and genders. There's very strong comment on the issue, all collected together in a chorus of protest and resistance, but also of hope."

*Blak In-Justice: Incarceration and Resilience* features acclaimed artists such as Gordon Bennett and Destiny Deacon. Alongside are works by artists who have experienced life in the carceral system and worked with The Torch program, such as Thelma Beeton (Palawa) and Stacey Edwards (Taungurung/Boonwurrung).

The Torch is a unique cultural arts program that operates within prisons across Victoria. Not only does the program assist inmates with connection to culture, language and Country, the program also delivers a financial benefit to prisoners, as their works are sold and the money put in trust for when they exit the system.

The program – which has been running since 2011 – has a proven track record of keeping prisoners from returning to jail and lifting people out of poverty.

"We have over 800 plus participants in the program. We have a recidivism rate of around 20% as opposed to the 60% recidivism rate, which is generally for our people. I think it's 76 nationally," Morris told the

*Koori Mail*.

"The last four years we've sold and licensed \$1.1 million worth of works from the program, which is providing much needed economic support for individuals, families and communities and changing their trajectory."

One of the highlights of the exhibition are works by Walmajarri artist Jimmy Pike, who's unique style was developed while serving time in Fremantle Prison in the 1980's after being convicted of murder.

While incarcerated in Fremantle Prison, Pike participated in art classes which played a pivotal role in nurturing his artistic talents. Pike's unique style is characterised by bold colours and representations of his desert homeland, with his artwork gaining recognition even before his release, with his works exhibited in major Australian galleries.

"Jimmy Pike transformed his life while in Fremantle Prison through connection to art," Morris told the *Koori Mail*. "He became, and still is, one of our most recognised national and

international artists."

It is this inspiration that underpins The Torch. However, despite the success of the program – not only in keeping Aboriginal people out of prison but reconnecting them to culture, language and Country – the program still struggles for financial support from governments.

"Here we have a program still running on the smell of an oily rag," Morris told the *Koori Mail*.

"We still have to fight and do so much work to maintain our operation. Imagine if this program was funded on the level that it should be. How about national leadership and state leadership gets together and says, 'let's invest in what's working'. People throw their hands up and say it's all too hard, but we know it's not too hard because we have the hope and the passion and commitment."

***Blak In-Justice: Incarceration and Resilience* runs from 5 April - 20 July 2025 at the Heide Museum of Modern Art.**



# Indigenous artist's career catapults ahead



**BUPUNGU**, an innovative exhibition of prints by Badu Island artist Matilda Nona, has gone on show at the NorthSite Contemporary Arts Gallery in Gimuy/Cairns.

Matilda, a proud Argan woman, was the inaugural recipient of the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair's CATAPULT professional development program.

Following a two-week residency in Gimuy/Cairns earlier this year she has produced a body of work that draws on Maluilgal women's traditions and a deep connection to Country.

The CATAPULT professional development program was introduced in 2024 to create critical pathways for independent artists without formal gallery representation or affiliations with an art centre.

Inspired by her cultural upbringing and fascination with the natural world, Matilda's work honours the maternal knowledge systems of Zenadh Kes and utilises natural pigments sourced from the Torres Strait to create her signature inks.

It was during the two-week residency held in Cairns earlier this year that Nona, under the mentorship of master printer Dian Darmansjah, expanded her practice, developing a unique ink-making process using mango juice, ochre, and charcoal from her Torres Strait homelands.

Cairns International Arts Fair (CIAF) Exhibition and Development Manager, India Collins, said it has been a privilege to watch Matilda's professional growth over the last 12 months.

"It is gratifying to see our vision for CATAPULT come to life. Not only has



Argan artist Matilda Nona speaks to guests about her innovative ink and print making process at the official opening of BUPUNGU at NorthSite Contemporary Arts in Gimuy/Cairns. Photo: Phil Schouteten, Phisch Creative.

it succeeded in helping to bring Matilda's cultural narratives to life through printmaking, but it has also manifested in this stunning collection of work. And this is just the beginning, with much more to come," Ms Collins said.

Supported by the Queensland Government, CATAPULT is an accelerator and showcase program for Queensland's First Nations artists. The program comprises two streams: professional development and a showcase program for independent

artists to feature work in CIAF's art fair exhibition.

CIAF was established in 2009 as a strategic initiative of Backing Indigenous Arts, aiming to build a stronger, more sustainable, and ethical Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts industry in Queensland.

In 2024, CIAF contributed over \$9 million to the Gimuy/Cairns and Queensland economies, cementing its place as a premier event on the national cultural calendar.

Matilda Nona's work will be on

show and for sale until 17 May 2025 and will be featured at CIAF 2025 from 10-13 July as part of the Art Fair Showcase at Tanks Arts Centre.

The exhibition will include works from more than 30 exhibitors, art centres, commercial galleries and independent artists in Tank 3 and 4, and over 48 artisans across two pavilions along the Tanks promenade. Tickets for CIAF's opening night are on sale now.

For more information, visit [www.ciaf.com.au](http://www.ciaf.com.au)

# Make Good Festival at Bundanon



**BUNDANON** Art Museum will launch the Make Good Festival: Ideas for better living

from 17-18 May on the land of the Dharawal and Dhurga language groups on the Shoalhaven River in NSW.

The two-day program will feature an inspiring lineup of authors, artists, makers, and thinkers who will explore practical ways to create positive change. The festival will also include a strong line up of First Nations speakers and artists.

Local First Nations Custodians Joel Deaves and Jordan Thomas will lead a guided cultural bush walk from 1.30pm on Saturday May 17.

Joel and Jordan will give an introduction to reading Country, sharing their traditional stories, language, and knowledge about healing Country, and Indigenous fire management.

Earlier on Saturday at 11.30am Dr Paul Callaghan, a member of the Worimi people from coastal Australia, will discuss his best-selling book, *The Dreaming Path: Indigenous Wisdom to live our best story*.

Dr Callaghan, who has



Festival-goers will take part in a cultural bush walk.

over 20 years of experience as a healer and spiritual guide, will share how knowledge from First Nations people may be a means of finding purpose in modern life.

Also on Saturday, Wiradjuri fibre artist, Jessika Spencer, a finalist in the 2024 National Indigenous Fashion Awards, will run a drop-in workshop on woven jewellery making, using eco-dyed natural fibres to create

contemporary pieces that speak to ancient traditions.

Rachel Kent, CEO, Bundanon said: "Bundanon has always been about fostering connection, creativity, and learning. Make Good Festival aligns seamlessly with Bundanon's mission to inspire innovation through art, science and culture.

For info go to: [www.bundanon.com.au/make-good/](http://www.bundanon.com.au/make-good/)



Dr Paul Callaghan.



Jessika Spencer.





The expanded line up of the proppaNOW collective Richard Bell, Tony Albert, Warraba Weatherall, Megan Cope, Lily Eather, Shannon Brett, Gordon Hookey and Vernon Ah Kee.

# Award-winning artist collective to take new show to Cairns

By CHRISTIAN MORROW



FIRST Nations artist collective, proppaNOW's provocative exhibition

*OCCURRENT AFFAIR* wrapped up its current iteration at Lismore Regional Gallery last Saturday with a revealing panel discussion hosted by *Koori Mail* cultural lead Rhoda Roberts.

But far from finishing up, the collective behind the award-winning show has expanded its membership and will move on to stage their next project, *OCCURRENT AFFAIR: JUSTICE NOW* from Saturday 24 May - Sun 7 Sep 2025 at the Court House Gallery in Cairns.

## New show

The new show embraces the slippage between language and its associated readings to probe and present new narratives. The exhibition will reflect on the ongoing state of affairs affecting Aboriginal peoples and issues that are relevant to all Australians.

In conjunction with *OCCURRENT AFFAIR: JUSTICE NOW* Mulgrave Twilight Films will be screening Richard Bell's film, *You can Go Now* at 7pm on Saturday June 7 at Mulgrave Gallery.

The film looks at 50 years of First Nations activism in Australia as seen through the lens of Bell, a contemporary Australian Aboriginal artist who describes himself as "An activist masquerading as an artist."

*You Can Go Now* reveals the 'two Richards' - 'Richie' the provocateur and enfante terrible of



Tony Albert chats with Richard Bell during the panel discussion at Lismore Regional Gallery.

the art world who challenges its whiteness and the Richard who spent his childhood living in a tin shed, learnt his politics on the streets of Redfern and is known in his own community as an activist.

Formed in 2003 proppaNOW was awarded the prestigious Jane Lombard Prize for Art and Social Justice in 2021, for the significance and impact of its collective activities, the first collective to win this award.

In March this year the collective established its new headquarters in Brisbane's West End and also expanded its line-up to now include Richard Bell, Tony Albert, Jennifer Herd, Warraba Weatherall, Megan Cope, Lily

Eather, Shannon Brett, Gordon Hookey and Vernon Ah Kee.

Ms Eather, a Mandandanji woman who lives and works in Brisbane, is the daughter of the late Laurie Nilsen, an early member of proppaNOW, a renowned multidisciplinary artist in his own right. Eather has a deep commitment to the upkeep of her father's legacy.

Speaking on the eve of the final night of the Lismore show, Tony Albert said the long running *OCCURRENT AFFAIR* show not only won the Lombard Award but also "lit a fire under us all."

"We have been together for quite a long time and proppaNOW has provided a viable opportunity for us all to work within the art world and collectively become quite strong, gain representation and build fairly reasonable careers," he said.

## Important time

Mr Albert said it was a very important time for proppaNOW.

"*OCCURRENT AFFAIR* really provided us an opportunity to be reflective of what we have accomplished and has rekindled the embers that were burning away (inside us all) and realise the job isn't done yet.

"We need to continue the collective and be more active. It really pushed us to consider what the future holds for proppaNOW and ask what is left to do and what can we do?"

"We've got our own space now in West End, it's called the whichway space and we've got some younger artist in residence and we are evolving and expanding and looking at what our future holds."



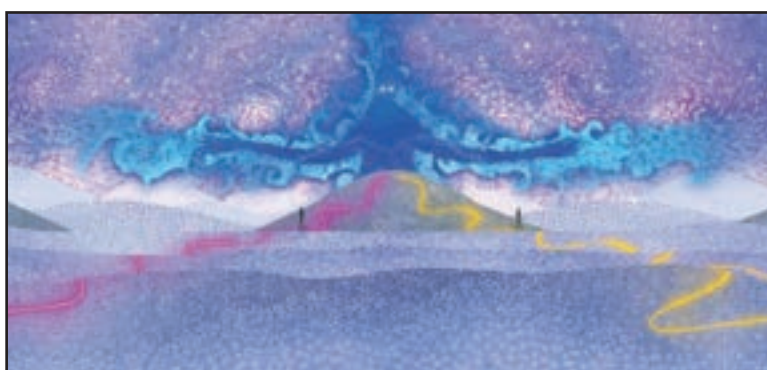
# VIVID Sea Gathering tells the story of Tunku and Ngaadi



VIVID Sydney, Australia's biggest festival of light will fuse art, innovation and technology in collaboration with cutting edge artists, musicians, thinkers and culinary experts when it illuminates the cityscape of Warrane (Sydney) from Friday May 23 to Saturday June 14, 2025.

As part of Vivid Sydney 2025, the Australian National Maritime Museum will present *Sea Gathering* the animated art of Walbunja and Ngarigo artist Cheryl Davison that brings to life the story of Mirriyaal, the creator who shaped the first humans, Tunku and Ngaadi, from the stars and brought them to the Earth, entrusting them with the task of creation.

This immersive combination of animation, sound and story telling will be projected onto the museum's rooftop nightly from May 23 until June 14 from 6-11pm, with optimal vantage points



Stills from Walbunja and Ngarigo artist Cheryl Davison's animation that brings to life the story of Mirriyaal, the creator.

at Pyrmont Bridge or King Street Wharf as part of the world-famous Vivid Light Walk.

Using a simple stick and stone, Tunku and Ngaadi, shaped the land, animals, and trees. As exhaustion and conflict arose, Tunku was cast into the sky as the moon, while Ngaadi's grief created rivers, oceans, and the waratah flower, symbolising the gift of life and nature.

The animation, developed by Studio Gilay, will feature a soundscape performance by the Djinama Yilaga choir which can be heard from the Pyrmont Bridge.

Artist Cheryl Davison formed Djinama Yilaga, a renowned choir made up of South Coast Yuin people, to help in the revitalisation of her ancestors' language, Dhurga, through song.

Museum Director and CEO Ms Daryl Karp said the museum was the perfect place for audiences to begin their Vivid Sydney journey.

"We are thrilled to partner with a First Nations artist and animation team in the work of

Cheryl Davison and Studio Gilay and showcase the choral works of the Djinama Yilaga choir to bring this timeless Dreaming story to life,' she said.

To celebrate Tunku and Ngaadi, the Museum will present *Sea Dreaming* from 6-8pm on Thursday May 29 at the Museum's performance platform.

*Sea Dreaming* with feature a live performance by artist Cheryl Davison and the Djinama Yilaga Choir. There will also be a maker's space where children can create whale lanterns and access the Action Stations lookout for the best view of the projection.

Visitors will also be guided along Pyrmont Bridge to see the full projection and hear the soundscape. Food and drinks will be available to purchase at Ripples, featuring a menu by First Nations chef, Mindy Woods, a Bundjalung woman of the Widjabul Wia-bul clan.

For Information go to <https://www.sea.museum/en/whats-on/events/vivid>

## Thelma Plum to headline Barunga 2025



THE BARUNGA Festival returns to the Northern Territory from June 6-9 with hosts, the Bagala Aboriginal Corporation, excited to announce that

Gamilaraay woman, musician and creator Thelma Plum will headline this year's festival.

This will be an exclusive Territory show from the multi-award winning singer and the first time Barunga has been headlined by a woman.

Plum will be joined in the line-up by Jawoyn/Larrakia/Torres Strait Islander woman and emerging rapper, Kootsie Don. In another exclusive for Barunga, there will be a special show by north east Arnhem Land's legendary rock-royalty East Journey.

The festival audience were smitten with Milla mania last year and by popular demand the brutha bois are bringing back their SAME BLOOD – J-MILLA x Yung Milla show to Barunga.

The bruthas will arrive a few days prior to the festival to work with youth on the ground and deliver a DJ set for the local blue light disco on Friday night.

In what promises to be a festival highlight, Yolngu Songman Rrawun Maymuru will perform a rare solo

show. Joined by yidaki and harmonies, the front man for East Journey and currently Yothu Yindi, will bring the ancestral Songlines of his people to Barunga.

Traditional Owner Esther Bulumbara said, "This is a wonderful opportunity for community to come together, celebrate our traditions, and engage with visitors in a meaningful way."

"We are thrilled to host the Barunga Festival on our country and share our rich cultural heritage with everyone," she said.

Situated 400kms from Darwin and 80kms southeast from Katherine, the festival will also feature traditional dance, yidaki playing, bush medicine workshops, weaving, Dreamtime storytelling and sports competitions.

In 1988, during the bicentennial year of European settlement, then Prime Minister Bob Hawke attended the Barunga Festival and was presented with the Barunga Statement, outlining a future treaty between First Nations people and the federal government. This historic moment remains a significant part of the festival's legacy.

Tickets are strictly limited: Go to <https://barungafestival.com.au>





# Winnie the Pooh at Mapoon



The Mapoon peoples dragged the aircraft along the beach by horse and on foot and human back, by rope!



## Jack Wilkie-Jans

In light of ANZAC Day 2025 I want to look back on a piece of WWII history from my place of Mapoon, Cape York Peninsula. In February of 1943 a Beaufort Mark VA Bomber, named *Winnie the Pooh*, encountered severe problems whilst en route to Yolngu's Wessel Islands patrolling the Gulf of Carpentaria. Sergeant A.R. Turner and his four-strong crew were forced to land at Janie Creek (south-west of Mapoon) due to the monsoonal conditions.

It was then that a remarkable 15 kilometre rescue effort was instigated by our Mapoon peoples.

As many as 150 people dragged the aircraft along the beach north-west towards Mapoon by horse and on foot and human back, by rope! Once reaching Trathalarrakwana/Cullen Point, where the old Marpuna Presbyterian Mission was located, an arduous process of dismantling the aircraft was undertaken. In part, this was to ensure the aircraft wouldn't be spotted by enemy aerial patrols and bring unwanted attention lower down the Cape. While this may seem small in the midst of the heightened and closing years of WWII internationally, and the rallying across the Northern Peninsula Area and Zenadth Kes/Torres Strait, it demonstrates how small actions are indeed very big.

This combined effort was a supreme exercise in unity and community and is revered as a legendary tale. The story of *Winnie the Pooh* was most aptly put to music and lyrics by Ken McDonald in his *All the Way to Mapoon* track on his much-loved

*Pigdogs, Orchids and Paraburdoo* album. This story exemplifies the ways First Nations civilian communities played instrumental roles in defending a country/nation state which left us bereft and unceremoniously uncredited, unacknowledged and certainly unrewarded for our help.

Even still, as seen at a Dawn Service, we are booed by fascist racists who don't care about us – but enough to envy and hate us for it. This, on a day sacred to Australians for remembering those who had spilt blood in defence of family and cultural values, and in light of the fact the many unheralded First Nations soldiers were unpaid, not even considered citizens or humans (officially at their times of serving), with many deliberately left behind overseas by the government at the ends of both wars, and who were shunned religiously from RSLs and wartime remembrance. On a day and during a Welcome to Country proceeding where an Aboriginal man was providing needed context to the 'national psyche' and – in spite of the horrors of the past 237 years – was performing a sacred ritual in welcoming community onto

Country. Irony isn't it, considering how veterans today are discarded after being used-up in Oil Wars?

Our use 'C' as capitalised when we say Country, as in welcoming to, is because we view Country as its own sentient being and view our presence through a veil of spiritual connectivity and visceral responsibility. We understand that Australia as a nation state exists for everybody today and that all service men and women (and animals) fight and die to keep us free from further tyranny. However, the fascists are back in the house. We understand that you don't need welcoming to cities and suburbs you live and work in. What we seek to welcome you into when performing Welcomes to Country is our world, our sense of Country and community which rests upon it and has done so for eons. ANZAC Day belongs to us too and not just "Australia for the white man". For we are *still* in the fight of our lives.

The Mapoon War Memorial (which was dedicated in 2010) is one of the only – if not considered by the Australian War Memorial as the first – to feature a plaque honouring First Nations warriors who defended our homelands

from invaders from 1606-1880s. The memorial also honours the men of Mapoon who were enlisted, those also part of the Civil Constructional Corps who helped build and maintain wartime infrastructure across the Cape and Torres, and for those who were seconded civilians to war efforts (for which no official record exists nor payments made by the Australian Defence Force).

All in all, the story of *Winnie the Pooh* is an example of the immense history which Cape York Peninsula holds in the protection of our continent, belonging to a region which was the place of first contact with Europeans in 1606 (the Duyfken voyage by Willem Janszoon). But, what became of the plane? Rumour has it that *Winnie the Pooh's* parts were sent to Charters Towers where they were reassembled and she lived on to fly another day!

As did the peoples of Mapoon, who returned to our homelands after being dispersed by flame and at gunpoint in 1963 by the Queensland Government. Now, and while still without a formal Parliamentary Apology, Mapoon is a thriving township with its own Local Government status.

## Bundjalung artist at Brisbane Affordable Art Fair



**B**UNDJALUNG artist Brad Turner (left) will bring his unique works to the Brisbane Affordable Art Fair from Thursday May 8 - Sunday May 11 at the Brisbane Showgrounds Exhibition Building in Bowen Hills.

The fair includes representation from Queensland and across Australia with a mixture of emerging and established artists showcasing a diverse range of contemporary artworks priced between \$100 and \$10,000.

Brad's work is deeply connected to his heritage and the stories of his people.

"Art for me is a powerful dialogue with my heritage," he said. "Each piece brings to life the rich stories of the lands, waters, and people of my culture."

"Creating art allows me to express my gratitude and respect for the country – its past, present, and future. It's a way to honour the spirit of the land and its people, ensuring that our voices and stories are not

just heard but felt and remembered.

"My palette is reflective of our culture's vibrancy along with hope and positivity and was inspired by my personal journey of healing following a challenging period in my life."

"I want to share this transformative power as a testament to cultural resilience and a source of personal and communal healing."

"My artworks are not just visual displays; they are narratives imbued with the wisdom and enduring traditions of the First Nations, designed to engage and inspire audiences across all backgrounds."

"I am also deeply committed to giving back to my community. Through exhibitions and partnerships, I support First Nations organisations working towards innovative solutions in health, education, and employment. These collaborations provide practical support to the community that nurtures me."

For information go to:  
<https://affordableartfair.com/fairs/brisbane/>



One of Brad's works.



# event listings

## AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

### Our Story: Aboriginal Chinese People in Australia

where: National Museum, Lawson Crescent, Acton ACT 2601  
when: Until 27 January 2026.  
info/bookings: Entry is free.

### 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/](http://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/](http://nga.gov.au/exhibitions/ever-present/)

## QUEENSLAND

### Through our Eyes exhibition Culture of region's young First Nations artists

where: UMI Arts, Jensen Plaza Gallery, Jensen Street, Manoora  
when: 9 May- 4 June 2025  
Info/tickets: <https://umiararts.com.au/>

### BUPUNGU

Exhibition by Argan artist Matilda Nona  
where: NorthSite Contemporary Arts, 96 Abbott Street, Gimuy/Cairns.  
when: until 17 May 2025.  
Information/tickets: [northsite.org.au/exhibitions/bupungu/](http://northsite.org.au/exhibitions/bupungu/)

### CIAF 2025 - Pay Attention

where: NorthSite Contemporary Arts, 96 Abbott Street, Gimuy/Cairns  
when: 10-13 July 2025  
Info/tickets: [www.ciaf.com.au](http://www.ciaf.com.au)

### Affordable Art Fair Brisbane

where: Brisbane Showgrounds, Gregory Terrace, Bowen Hills  
When: Friday 9 May: 10am – 8pm,  
Saturday 10 May: 10am – 5pm  
Sunday 11 May: 10am – 5pm  
Info/tickets: <https://affordableartfair.com/fairs/brisbane>

## NEW SOUTH WALES

### Preparing Ground

An all-female First Nations-led dance work that brings together community, climate, and culture.

where: The Art House.19-21 Margaret Street Wyong NSW 2259  
when: Fri 16 May 2025 - 8pm,  
Duration: 60 minutes, no interval  
info/tickets: [www.thearthousewyong.com.au/](http://www.thearthousewyong.com.au/)

### Make Good Festival: Ideas for better living

where: Bundanon Art Museum, 170 Riversdale Road, Illaroo. NSW.  
When: 17-18 May  
Info/tickets: <https://www.bundanon.com.au/make-good/>

### Mungari: Fishing, Resistance, Return

Return of four Gweagal spears stolen by crew of The Endeavour  
where: Chau Chak Wing Museum,



Picture: Guy McLean

# Rapping beats in the desert heat

Hip-Hop artist J-Milla has been making music with the kids at Papunya in the Northern Territory, and next month will be embarking on a tour to more remote areas of Australia. See our next edition for details.

University Place, University of Sydney  
when: The exhibition closes on 29 June  
info/bookings: Free Exhibition

### Bulaan Buruugaa Ngali

An exhibition of ancestral woven objects alongside newly commissioned contemporary works  
where/when: Lismore Regional Gallery, Sept 12, 2025 - Nov 9, 2025  
info/bookings: [artsnorthernrivers.com.au/search?query=Bulaan+Buruugaa+Ngali+Exhibition](http://artsnorthernrivers.com.au/search?query=Bulaan+Buruugaa+Ngali+Exhibition)

### Thinking together: Exchanges with the natural world

where: Bundanon Gallery, 170 Riversdale Road, Illaroo NSW 2540  
when: Running until 8 June 2025.  
info/bookings: [bundanon.com.au/](http://bundanon.com.au/)

### Warraba Weatherall: Shadow and Substance

when: 21 March – 21 September 2025  
where: Museum of Contemporary Art Level 1 South  
info/bookings: [www.mca.com.au/](http://www.mca.com.au/)  
General Admission ticket required  
Free for MCA Members, under 18s and Australian students

## VICTORIA

### CONFINED 16

when: Friday 23 May to Sunday 22 June 2025.  
Gallery hours- Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm; Saturday and Sunday, 1pm to 5pm  
where: Glen Eira City Council Gallery, 420 Glen Eira Rd, Caulfield

### Floribunda: NGV Collection Exhibition

where: Banjul Place Gallery, 2 Patrick NE Dr, Narre Warren VIC  
when: Until July 20  
info/bookings: [www.bunjilplace.com.au/events/floribunda](http://www.bunjilplace.com.au/events/floribunda)

### Treaty

Free 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: [slv.vic.gov.au/treaty](http://slv.vic.gov.au/treaty)

### Stitchin' Stories: Blak & Threadly

A tapeswtry of cultural narratives, history, and contemporary expressions of identity weave a rich story of First Nations fashion and textiles  
when: until Sunday 18 May 2025  
where: Koorie Heritage Trust, Birrarung Building, Fed Square.  
info/bookings: [www.koorieheritagetrust.com.au](http://www.koorieheritagetrust.com.au)

### Blak In-Justice: Incarceration and Resilience

A major exhibition developed in partnership with The Torch.  
when: July 20, 2025  
where: Heide Museum of Modern Art, 7 Templestowe Road, Bulleen Victoria 3105  
info/bookings: <https://www.heide.com.au/exhibitions/bla-k-in-justice/>

### TarraWarra Biennial 2025: We Are Eagles

when: March 29 until July 20, 2025

where: TarraWarra Museum of Art at 313 Healesville-Yarra Glen Road, Healesville VIC 3777  
info/bookings: [twma.com.au](http://twma.com.au)

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

### Red Earth Arts Festival (REAF) - First Lights Drone Show

when: 6:00pm – 8:00pm (Show begins at 7:00pm)  
where: Hearson's Cove, Murujuga National Park  
tickets/info: Free tickets essential. Register at <https://mayalarri.com.au>

### Red Earth Arts Festival (REAF) - Mayalarri Exhibition

Celebrating 25 Years of Juluwarlu  
Where: Karratha Tourism and Visitor Centre, Lot 4548 De Witt Rd, Karratha  
when: 11:00AM – 1:00PM Saturday, May 17, 2025  
tickets/info: Free. Register at <https://mayalarri.com.au>

### Illume

Touring nationally from June 4  
info/bookings: [bangarra.com.au/productions/illume/](http://bangarra.com.au/productions/illume/)

### Barunga Festival

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, Yolngu Songman and East Journey frontman Rrawun Maymuru  
when: June 7-10  
where: Barunga Festival  
info/bookings: [barungafestival.com.au/music/](http://barungafestival.com.au/music/)



# Employment

EXECUTIVE • PROFESSIONAL • POSITIONS VACANT

## 650 new jobs for remote communities



MORE than 650 new jobs with around 100 employers across remote Australia have been created following an overwhelming demand to the first grant round of the Federal Government's Remote Jobs and Economic Development (RJED) program.

These 650 new jobs are in addition to the 300 roles created through the New Jobs Program Trial with employers in the trial having the opportunity to request to transition to the RJED program,

creating a total of around 950 new jobs if they choose to do so.

Minister for Indigenous Australians, Senator Malarndirri McCarthy, said she was looking forward to seeing these jobs filled in remote areas across the country.

"The RJED is about giving people in remote communities the dignity of work, with decent wages and conditions, including superannuation and leave," she said.

"These jobs will help build skills, experience and contribute to Closing the Gap in employment

outcomes as well as contribute to remote communities and their economies.

"The Coalition has no vision to create jobs in remote communities or invest in remote communities.

"Labor went to the last election promising to replace the failed CDP program, only Labor will deliver on that commitment."

The government said the numbers of jobs in the list below were approximate and contingent on the signing of grant agreements.

- Arnhem Land & Groote Eylandt – 140 jobs

- Central Australia – 100 jobs
- Greater Western Australia – 80 jobs
- Kimberley – 50 jobs
- North Queensland – 130 jobs
- South Australia – 30 jobs
- South Queensland – 20 jobs
- Top End & Tiwi Islands – 100 jobs
- Western New South Wales – 10 jobs

These jobs are the first through the \$707 million RJED program which federal Labor expects will create up to 3,000 jobs over three years and is the first stage of

replacing the CDP.

As part of the RJED application process, employers needed to work with their communities on what jobs were wanted and demonstrate this evidence in their bid for funding – a requirement directly reflecting community consultation feedback on the program design.

Jobs approved reflect a mix of part-time, full-time and casual roles in a variety of sectors, including tourism, agriculture, community services and maintenance, culture and the arts.

## Last chance to have a say on workplace survey



ABORIGINAL and Torres Strait Islander workers across Australia are invited to share their experiences in the second phase of a national study to inform the creation of safer, fairer, and more culturally inclusive workplaces to ensure First Nations people can fully participate in the Australian workforce.

The Gari Yala 2 survey closes on Friday 9 May 2025. Gari Yala 2 is a national study by UTS Jumbunna Centre for Indigenous Education and Research, UTS Business School, and Diversity Council Australia (DCA), with funding from NAB Foundation.

It is open to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people aged 18 years or over who are currently working or have been employed within the past two years. The survey takes around 20 minutes to complete, and eligible participants who finish the survey will be entered into a competition to win one of ten \$100 Jarin Street gift vouchers.

Employers are also encouraged to share this survey with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander team members and networks to help drive meaningful change.

The first phase of Gari Yala – meaning 'speak the truth' in the Wiradjuri language – was released in 2020 and exposed significant barriers faced by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workers, including racism, exclusion, and inadequate workplace responses when concerns were raised. It



**Reconciliation Australia CEO, Karen Mundine encouraged employers and workplaces to share the survey with their First Nations employees.**

provided clear, evidence-based actions for organisations seeking to create safer, fairer, and more culturally inclusive workplaces for First Nations peoples. Gari Yala 2 will build on these findings to track progress and identify ongoing challenges, with results expected in October 2026.

Professor Nareen Young, Associate Dean at UTS Business School and Professor, Indigenous Policy at the Jumbunna Institute, said it was vital that First Nations voices

continue to shape the national conversation about workplace safety and inclusion.

"Gari Yala is the only Indigenous-led and overseen employment research in the country that informs the employment community about what Indigenous people experience at work," Nareen said, "It is self-determination in action. That vital factor means it is trusted by Indigenous people and as a result provides a wealth of information to assist in recruitment, retention, promotion and career development.

"In the past five years, Gari Yala has led the change in narrative around Indigenous people's employment needs, wants and ambitions. It is Indigenous owned, working with ally organisations and people. We thank the NAB Foundation for their generous partnership, and Mob for support."

Kate Russell, Chair of DCA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander External Advisory Panel and CEO of Supply Nation, added:

"The Gari Yala survey is an extremely important undertaking to continue to collect information directly from Indigenous employees as to the state of their workplaces, relationships with other employees, pathways to advancement and how their employers prioritise diversity and inclusion.

"I encourage all organisations to be vigilant in developing safe and inclusive workplaces where all employees can feel secure and motivated to bring their best. I look forward to seeing the results of the

survey and forthcoming report."

This project is run by and for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and is overseen by an expert panel of distinguished Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander professionals, academics and experts. Survey responses will be securely stored, treated confidentially and all data will remain anonymous.

The Gari Yala survey is also supported by Reconciliation Australia and Supply Nation. Each of these organisations work with networks comprising thousands of diverse organisations.

Reconciliation Australia CEO, Karen Mundine, encouraged employers and workplaces to share the survey with their First Nations employees.

"To improve the experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the workplace we need to hear directly from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people about their experiences," said Karen.

NAB Group Executive People and Culture Sarah White said:

"The NAB Foundation is proud to support the next phase of the Gari Yala. Through engagement with First Nations employees around the country, the report will inform better discussions and decision-making around workplace safety and inclusivity."

- The survey can be found by searching for Gari Yala 2 on your favourite web browser.

## 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!**

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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.





## Exciting Management Role with Great Benefits!

Are you looking for an exciting new challenge and have a desire to work directly with community members in a rewarding and fulfilling career?

The Grafton Ngerrie Local Aboriginal Land Council (GNLALC) are searching for an experienced and committed **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** who can take the organisation in a positive direction and accomplish a number of key projects that will secure the financial future of the GNLALC.

This Role requires a person with key organisation and planning skills and an ability to multi-task. You will be surrounded by a supportive and committed Board and Membership and have access to great salary benefits including salary sacrifice.

GNLALC are one of the region's largest landowners and have unlimited potential in terms of economic and social development opportunities.

For information on the position and to obtain a recruitment package, please contact the contact officer Sabrina Carlino on (02) 6642 6020 or [admin@gnlalc.org.au](mailto:admin@gnlalc.org.au) to obtain further information.

Applications marked "Confidential" and posted to:

**Brett Tibbett, P.O. Box 314, SOUTH GRAFTON NSW 2460** or e-mailed to above address.

**Applications close: Friday 30th May 2025**



## Principal – Independent Aboriginal Pre-School and Primary School

**Join our team and make a difference in the lives of our students!**

We are seeking an exceptional Principal to lead our Aboriginal Pre-School and Primary School in regional NSW, Australia. As a key member of our school community, you will be responsible for providing strategic leadership, vision, and direction to our school, while ensuring the highest quality education and care for our students.

### About the School:

Our school is a vibrant and inclusive community that values the unique cultural heritage and experiences of our Aboriginal students. We are committed to providing a high-quality education that prepares our students for success in all aspects of life. Our school is managed by an independent Board, and we are seeking a Principal who is passionate about leading and managing a school dedicated to the education and well-being of our students.

### About the Role:

As our new Principal, you will be responsible for:

- Providing strategic leadership and direction to the school, in collaboration with the Board and stakeholders
- Developing and implementing a vision for the school that is aligned with our values and mission
- Building and maintaining relationships with staff, students, parents, and the broader community
- Ensuring the highest quality education and care for our students, including curriculum design and implementation, teacher professional development, and student well-being
- Managing and leading a team of teachers and support staff
- Developing and implementing policies and procedures that support the school's mission and values

### Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree in Education or a related field
- Proven experience as a Principal or in a leadership role in a school setting
- Strong understanding of the Aboriginal community and its cultural practices
- Strong knowledge of Department of Education Pre-school regulations and the National Quality Framework
- Ability to build and maintain relationships with staff, students, parents, and the broader community
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to lead and manage a team of teachers and support staff
- Strong understanding of curriculum design and implementation, teacher professional development, and student well-being
- Ability to manage a multi-million dollar budget, in compliance with State and Federal legislation
- Ability to develop and implement policies and procedures that support the school's mission and values
- Persons who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander preferred

### What We Offer:

- A competitive salary package
- A supportive and collaborative school community
- Opportunities for professional development and growth
- A chance to make a real difference in the lives of our students and the community

### How to Apply:

If you are passionate about leading and managing a school that is dedicated to the education and well-being of our students, please submit your application, including your resume and a cover letter. In your application, you must address the specific criteria below. Please email your application to [minimbahboard@gmail.com](mailto:minimbahboard@gmail.com)

### Selection Criteria

1. Relevant qualifications and a thorough understanding of curriculum design and implementation, particularly within an independent school context.
2. A demonstrated record of leadership, innovation, achievement and quality improvement in primary and pre-school school teaching.
3. Demonstrated experience with strategic people leadership, leading a positive culture in the workplace, in strategic planning and in providing operational leadership guidance for the academic directions of a School.
4. Excellent liaison and interpersonal skills with the ability to build teams, foster and negotiate relationships and partnerships which extend and develop the diverse activities of the school.
5. Demonstrated in-depth understanding of the Aboriginal community and its cultural practices, experience working with Aboriginal students, staff, and families, and an ability to develop and implement culturally responsive programs and policies.

### Contact Information:

**Email:** [minimbahboard@gmail.com](mailto:minimbahboard@gmail.com)

**Closing Date:** 31 May 2025

**We look forward to receiving your application.**

## Finance Manager

**(Part-Time) – Not-for-Profit Sector**



We're seeking a proactive and experienced **Finance Manager** to join our passionate, close-knit team in **Northern NSW**. This is a **part-time position** suited to someone who enjoys rolling up their sleeves and taking ownership of finance functions in a meaningful, community-focused organisation.

### About the Role

In this hands-on role, you will be responsible for a range of finance functions working closely with the bookkeeper – supporting their role in bookkeeping and payroll. You will be responsible for reporting, compliance, and strategic financial planning. Working closely with the team, you'll ensure financial integrity and sustainability, while also contributing to the broader success of the organisation.

### Key Responsibilities

- Manage day-to-day finance operations
- Prepare budgets, forecasts, and financial reports
- Ensure compliance with a range of NFP regulatory and funding requirements
- Handle grant acquittals and support the annual audit process
- Provide practical, timely financial advice to the Board and management
- Maintain and improve finance systems and processes

### About You

You're a hands-on finance professional who's comfortable working across all levels of financial operations in a small team environment. You'll bring:

- Experience in finance roles within the **NFP or community sector**
- Solid understanding of NFP compliance, reporting, and governance
- Qualifications in Accounting/Bookkeeping
- Proficiency in accounting software (e.g. Xero, MYOB, or similar)
- Great attention to detail, initiative, and the ability to work independently

### What We Offer

- A flexible, part-time role (days negotiable to suit your lifestyle)
- A supportive and collaborative small team environment
- The opportunity to contribute directly to a cause that matters
- Work/life balance in the stunning Northern NSW region
- Benefits associated with the NFP sector

For any inquiries regarding the position, candidates can contact our Business Manager via email at [business@jalilalc.com.au](mailto:business@jalilalc.com.au) or by phone at (02) 6686 7055.

**Looking to make a meaningful impact in a role where your work truly counts?**



Gilgandra & Weilwan LALC's

***This is a readvertised position,  
previous applicants don't need to reapply***

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Permanent Full-time Position (Job share)  
35 hours per week (shared between two LALC's)

Salary range negotiable from \$100,000 plus entitlements & Superannuation.

The CEO is accountable to the Board of Directors & is responsible for the day-to-day operations. The CEO ensures the activities of GLALC & WLALC are consistent with the priorities & directions of LALC's policy framework set down by the Members. The CEO ensures the services of both LALC's are of high quality & responsive to the changing needs of the communities & funding environment. The Boards of GLALC & WLALC seek to appoint a CEO with the following core technical competencies:

- a) Business Management – extensive experience in a senior management position.
- b) Operational Management – Strategic approach to day-to-day operational management of a Remote Aboriginal Service.
- c) Financial Management – manage the financial affairs of the organisation, including budgeting, financial management (MYOB & Xero) & reporting to ensure compliance with legal & funding obligations.
- d) Staff Management – develop & build on a team that is committed to a productive working culture within the policies & procedures of GLALC & WLALC.
- e) Demonstratable knowledge and understanding of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (ALRA) (or the ability to rapidly acquire) with the capacity to interpret and implement legislation and sound communication skills.
- f) External Relations & Representation – cultivate strategic alliances & positive relationships to effectively represent & advocate for GLALC & WLALC.
- g) Qualifications in business, finance, or community services disciplines (or equivalent experience) or willing to obtain.

Selection Criteria for appointment to the role of CEO will be assessed based on the suitability & background & fit to the key candidate requirements. (listed above). Please call or email for employment package or to discuss the role: Gilgandra LALC – Sally Carr – 02 68471477 or Email: [admin@gilgallalc.com](mailto:admin@gilgallalc.com)

**Position closes: 14th May2025**

Please Post or email applications to:  
GLALC & WLALC CEO Recruitment Panel  
PO BOX 163, Gilgandra NSW 2827

Weilwan LALC



## Aboriginal Case Manager Casino

**Would you like to make a real difference in people's lives? If so, come and join the team at Momentum Collective.**

This position will provide Specialist Homelessness Services Domestic and Family Violence program/s to First Nations people and to deliver quality person-centred services with compassion and dignity.

Enjoy work life balance with a 4 day work week. This is a part time fixed term role to June 2026.

**Here at Momentum, we are known to provide a culturally safe environment and provide career development and mentoring opportunities for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.**

Momentum Collective is committed to creating social change and inclusive opportunities for everyone. We promote diversity when recruiting our team and are guided by our core values of trust and respect, wellbeing, innovation, working well together and being gracious. We respect the special place our nation's first people hold in our communities and value the differences in everyone.

**To apply:** please call Cindy on 0417228384 or email [recruitment@mymomentum.org.au](mailto:recruitment@mymomentum.org.au)

## Framlingham Aboriginal Trust

The Framlingham Aboriginal Trust is an organisation formed under the Aboriginal Lands Act 1970 (Vic) and is dedicated to serving the best interests of its shareholders and community residents.

### SITE MANAGER

An exciting opportunity has arisen for an experienced and motivated site manager at the Framlingham Aboriginal Trust, based in Purnim Victoria.

### HEAD OF OPERATIONS

Framlingham Aboriginal Trust: An exciting opportunity has arisen for an experienced and motivated Head of Operations Manager at the Framlingham Aboriginal Trust, based in Purnim, Victoria.

**Expressions of interest should be addressed to Robert Campbell the Chief Executive Officer and emailed to [ceo@fram.org.au](mailto:ceo@fram.org.au)**

Please include a cover letter addressing the criteria above and your current CV.

For all enquiries regarding this position, please contact:  
Robert Campbell on (03) 8603 1321.

*Applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are especially welcome.*





## Chief Executive Officer (Aboriginal Identified)

**Location:** Bourke, NSW

**Salary Package:** \$200,000 per annum + vehicle + quality family home  
**First Nations Identified Position**

Are you an experienced and passionate leader looking for an opportunity to drive meaningful change in Aboriginal health and community services? Bourke Aboriginal Corporation Health Service (BACHS) is seeking a dynamic, strategic, and visionary **Chief Executive Officer** (CEO) to lead the organisation and further its mission of improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal communities in the Bourke region.

### About the Role:

As CEO of BACHS, you will have the unique opportunity to shape and implement the strategic direction of a key Aboriginal community-controlled health service. You will oversee all aspects of the organisation, ensuring the delivery of high-quality health services, effective risk management, and the achievement of operational and financial goals. You will play a key role in establishing and maintaining strong partnerships with government agencies, Aboriginal organisations, and local stakeholders to secure funding and improve community outcomes.

### Key Responsibilities:

- **Leadership & Strategic Direction:** Lead the development and implementation of BACHS' strategic plans to ensure alignment with organisational goals and values. Provide direction to a dedicated executive team, ensuring operational and financial excellence.
- **Community & Stakeholder Engagement:** Strengthen and build meaningful relationships with Aboriginal communities, government bodies, and external stakeholders. Advocate for the needs of Aboriginal people and ensure that services meet cultural, health, and social needs.
- **Financial & Operational Management:** Oversee the financial management of the organisation, including budget preparation, funding applications, and achieving financial performance targets. Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and organisational policies.
- **Workforce Development:** Foster a culture of inclusivity, learning, and growth, including the implementation of an Indigenous succession plan for leadership roles. Support the professional development of all staff, ensuring high performance and retention.
- **Risk & Compliance:** Ensure the effective identification and management of risks, along with the continuous improvement of service delivery standards.

### Key Selection Criteria:

- Qualification in Business, Management, Health, or a related field.
- Senior leadership experience, ideally in an Aboriginal community-controlled organisation.
- Deep understanding of Aboriginal health and the unique challenges facing Aboriginal communities.
- Proven track record in strategic planning, financial management, and team leadership.
- Exceptional communication and stakeholder engagement skills.
- Strong governance and compliance knowledge, with experience working with boards.
- Valid driver's licence and ability to obtain required clearances (National Police Check, Working with Children check, etc.).

### The Package:

- A competitive salary package of **\$200,000 per annum**, plus a **vehicle** and **house**.
- Full-time, permanent position located in Bourke, NSW, offering a unique opportunity to work in a vibrant, culturally rich community.
- Relocation assistance of up to \$9,000.

### Why Join BACHS?

At BACHS, you will have the chance to make a tangible difference in the lives of Aboriginal people in the Bourke region. You will be part of an organisation that prioritises the health, safety, and wellbeing of its community, providing you with the resources and support to succeed in your role. We are committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace, this position is a First Nations identified position designed for someone of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

### How to Apply:

To apply, please submit your resume and a cover letter addressing the key selection criteria. For more information or to discuss the role in detail, please contact Julia Trendall on 0418 677 781 or [julia@abundancehr.com.au](mailto:julia@abundancehr.com.au).

**Applications close 18th May 2025.**

We look forward to hearing from passionate and committed leaders ready to drive positive change within Aboriginal communities.

## ExxonMobil

### Community Consultation - decommissioning of oil & gas infrastructure in Bass Strait



An ExxonMobil Brand

Esso Australia Resources Pty Ltd (Esso), a wholly owned subsidiary of ExxonMobil Australia Pty Ltd, is committed to operating and decommissioning its Gippsland and Bass Strait facilities safely and effectively. After delivering energy to Australia for over 50 years, many of the Bass Strait oil and gas fields are now reaching the end of their productive life. As planning for decommissioning progresses, Esso is focused on safely shutting-down non-producing facilities and ensuring they stay safe throughout the entire decommissioning process.

### Community Information Sessions

If you'd like to know more about **labour and logistics**, or any other topics related to the decommissioning of platforms and pipelines in Bass Strait, the Esso Consultation Team along with **presentations from CMA Contracting (Dismantling and Recycling Contractor) and Qube (Operators of Barry Beach Marine Terminal)**, will be hosting community information sessions at the following locations:

#### Monday 19 May 2025 - Welshpool

Welshpool Memorial Hall  
49 Main St

#### Tuesday 20 May 2025 - Foster

Foster War Memorial Arts Centre  
79 Main Street, Foster

#### Wednesday 21 May 2025 - Leongatha

Leongatha Memorial Hall  
6-8 McCartin St

#### Monday 26 May 2025 - Yarram

The Yarram Hub  
156 Grant Street

#### Tuesday 27 May 2025 - Lakes Entrance

The Bellevue Hotel,  
201 The Esplanade

#### Wednesday 28 May 2025 - Sale

The Criterion Hotel  
90 Macalister Street, Sale

All the above sessions will run from **5.00pm - 7.00pm** with a presentation about Esso's operations with a focus on decommissioning projects.

We encourage you to come along and ask questions or to raise any concerns you may have. Please **register your attendance** by emailing: [consultation@exxonmobil.com](mailto:consultation@exxonmobil.com)

If these dates and times don't suit, contact us at [consultation@exxonmobil.com](mailto:consultation@exxonmobil.com) or by phone on 03 9261 0000.

The Esso Team will also be available to discuss all current activities, including:

- Bass Strait State Waters Environment Plan
- Bass Strait Environment Plan
- Jack-Up-Rig Plug & Abandonment Revision 1 Environment Plan
- Turrum Phase 3 Drilling Environment Plan
- Decommissioning Planning Campaign 1A

Like to be consulted about these activities?

Esso is working to identify and consult with relevant persons (stakeholders) whose functions, interests, or activities may be affected by one or more of Esso's proposed activities.

Complete the [Esso Consultation Questionnaire \(xli.do\)](#) in the Esso Consultation Hub to let us know if you'd like to be consulted or have any questions or feedback.

Refer to the NOPSEMA brochure [Consultation on offshore petroleum environment plans brochure.pdf](#) ([nopsema.gov.au](http://nopsema.gov.au)) to understand more about consultation on offshore petroleum environment plans assessed under the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Environment) Regulations 2023.

Your feedback and our response will be included in the relevant regulatory application documentation and submitted to the regulator.

Please connect us with other interested people

If there is anyone you know who may be interested in our activities, we encourage you to share this information with them.

To find out more information



For more information about Esso's activities and other projects, go to the Esso Consultation Hub at: <https://corporate.exxonmobil.com/locations/australia/our-approach>

# Want a career working with our mob, for our mob?

**The Department of Communities and Justice  
is looking for dedicated caseworkers and  
casework managers to join our team.**

### Why join us?

- **Rewarding work:** Contribute to meaningful change by supporting children and families.
- **Career growth:** Access to professional development and career advancement opportunities.
- **Supportive environment:** Work in a collaborative and inclusive workplace that values diversity.
- **Work-life balance:** Enjoy flexible working arrangements to support your personal and professional life.
- **Community impact:** Make a tangible difference in the lives of those who need it most.



**Apply today!**

To find out more visit  
[careersatdcj.com/caseworkers](https://careersatdcj.com/caseworkers)  
or scan the QR code.







## RETRACTION

The Koori Mail would like to acknowledge the printing of an incorrect ad noting that the Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) was holding a members special meeting on May 17 2025.

**This notice was not from the Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation, and the meeting has not been organised by BAC.** No BAC directors, management or staff will be in attendance at this meeting, and any resolutions made at the meeting will have no legal standing.

## KYBURRA MUNDA YALGA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

# NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Members of Kyburra Munda Yalga Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (ICN 7581) (KMY) will take place as follows:

**Time:** 10.00am – 1.00pm  
**Date:** Saturday, 17 May 2025  
**Place:** Bowen PCYC  
Cnr Hay Street & Queens Road, Bowen QLD 4805

### Purpose of the meeting

This meeting has been called to hold the 2024 Annual General Meeting for KMY as required under the *Corporations (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*. KMY regrets to advise that it cannot assist with accommodation and travel expenses. A light lunch and refreshments will be provided.

To obtain an AGM agenda, please contact Saylor Legal on 07 4431 0074 or send an email to: [jurupeopleRNTBC@outlook.com](mailto:jurupeopleRNTBC@outlook.com).



## Notice under Section 29 of the *Native Title Act 1993*, Exploration Licence 6319 (Act 1992)

This notice is given in accordance with the requirements of section 29 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Commonwealth).

### Description of the nature of the act

Pursuant to the *Native Title (Right to Negotiate (Exclusion) – NSW Land) Determination No. 1 of 1996* (Cth), Exploration Licence 6319 includes a condition to the effect that the holder must not prospect on any land or waters covered by the licence in relation to which native title exists without the prior written consent of the Minister administering the *Mining Act 1992* (the 'Native Title Condition').

The Minister administering the *Mining Act 1992* intends to give consent to prospecting on land subject to native title in the licence in accordance with the *Native Title (Right to Negotiate (Inclusion) – NSW Land) Approval No. 1 of 1996* (Cth).

Should consent be granted, the licence holder may apply to renew or transfer the licence prior to it expiring (including partial renewals or partial transfers).

**Note:** If the consent is granted, it will apply to any renewal, re grant or re-making (including partial renewals or partial transfers) or extension of the term of the licence, which may be valid pursuant to section 24MD(1) of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) without a further notification under section 29.

### Holder's details

Alkane Resources Ltd (ACN 000 689 216) is the holder of Exploration Licence 6319 for Group 1 minerals.

The licence contains a condition that the holder must not prospect on any land or waters on which native title exists without the prior consent of the Minister administering the *Mining Act 1992*. The licence holder has sought the Minister's consent to conduct prospecting activities in the entire licence area.

### Description of area that may be affected

The entire area of Exploration Licence 6319 which covers about 7 units and is situated approximately 2 kilometres east northeast of Peak Hill, in the State of NSW.

### Name and postal address of person by whom the act would be done

The Minister administering the *Mining Act 1992*, PO Box 344, Hunter Region Mail Centre, NSW 2310.

### How further information about the act and description of the area can be obtained

Further information may be obtained from; Assessments and Systems, NSW Resources within the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development on (02) 4063 6600 or [titles@regional.nsw.gov.au](mailto:titles@regional.nsw.gov.au).

### Notification Day

For the purposes of section 29(4) of the *Native Title Act 1993* the notification day is 22 May 2025. Under section 30 of the *Native Title Act 1993* persons have until 3 months after the notification day to take certain steps to become native title parties in relation to this notice.



# Expression of Interest

## Ginninderry First Nations Reference Group

Ginninderry is seeking First Nations representatives with diverse skills and expertise who can consider how the project can contribute to the opportunities and wellbeing of First Nations communities in the Capital Region.

**Expressions of Interest submissions  
close 5pm, 30 April 2025.**

For more information visit  
[ginninderry.com/gfnrg](https://ginninderry.com/gfnrg)



## RELEVANT PERSONS CONSULTATION ON ENVIRONMENT PLANS PETROLEUM ACTIVITIES OFFSHORE PETERBOROUGH VICTORIA

**Amplitude Energy\*** plans to conduct gas development drilling and gas field development work near our existing subsea infrastructure and within our existing offshore **Otway Basin** licence areas, offshore Peterborough, Victoria. We call this the East Coast Supply Project (ECSP).

The Otway Basin has been producing gas for decades - we are planning to provide gas supply exclusively to the domestic market to help alleviate forecasted shortages. As part of the ECSP, two environment plans (EPs) are being developed. The first EP is called ECSP: Annie-2 development drilling EP and is for the drilling of the Annie-2 development well. The second EP is called ECSP-Wells Connection EP and is for the connecting of wells to our existing subsea pipelines. All activities under these two EPs will be carried out in Commonwealth waters, over 9kms offshore from the coast.

### Relevant persons consultation

If your functions, interests or activities may be affected by our proposed activities under the two EPs, then we invite you to consult with us. We consult with relevant persons to understand if you may have information that we might not otherwise be aware of which we can use to improve our environment plans.

For more information about our proposed projects, please see our consultation page via the QR code, or at <https://amplitudeenergy.com.au/consultation>.

### The consultation process

For information about our offshore environment plans and the consultation process, including our obligations, please visit: <https://amplitudeenergy.com.au/consultation/why-we-consult>

Please contact us by May 31 2025 at [stakeholder@amplitudeenergy.com.au](mailto:stakeholder@amplitudeenergy.com.au) or call 61 8 8100 4900 if you would like further information or to be consulted on these EPs.

\*Amplitude Energy is the name of the parent company of Cooper Energy (CH) Pty Ltd.



Notice of non-claimant applications for determination of native title in New South Wales

Notification day: 21 May 2025

‘Non-claimant’ applications have been made to the Federal Court of Australia (Federal Court) seeking determinations that native title does not exist in the areas described below. The Applicants have non-native title interests in these areas, which are set out in their applications and summarised below.

Under the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), there can be only one determination of native title for an area. Unless there are relevant native title claims, as defined in section 24FE, over the areas described below on or before **20 August 2025**, the areas may be subject to protection under section 24FA and **acts may be done which extinguish or otherwise affect native title**.

A person who claims to hold native title rights and interests in any of these areas may wish to file a native title claimant application or become a party to the non-claimant application. These may be the only opportunities to have those rights and interests taken into account in the Federal Court’s determination. Any other person may also wish to become a party.

If you want to become a party to any of these applications, you must file a Form 5 (Notice of Intention to become a Party) with the Federal Court, **on or before 20 August 2025**. Further information regarding how to file a Form 5 is available from [www.fedcourt.gov.au](http://www.fedcourt.gov.au). After **20 August 2025**, you will need to seek leave from the Federal Court to become a party.



**Applicant’s name:** The Armidale Rugby Union and Netball Club Incorporate

**Federal Court File No:** NSD236/2025

**Non-native title interest:** The applicant holds a non-exclusive license over an area which includes the area of this application to occupy the same for a permitted use, being ‘The lawful activities of the Licensee and its authorised successors carried out in furtherance of he [sic] Licensee’s objectives’ for a term of 10 years.

**Order sought by Applicant:** The applicant seeks a determination that native title does not exist in relation to all the land and waters within the area described as the Application Area.

**Description of area:** The application covers about 3.2 ha and is located within Lot 3 on DP1055438 in the city of Armidale.

**Relevant LGA:** Armidale Regional Council



**Applicant’s name:** Ballina Bowling & Recreation Club Limited (ABN 30 000 984 412)

**Federal Court File No:** NSD312/2025

**Non-native title interest:** In relation to Lot 5611 on DP1282979, the applicant holds a short-term licence under section 2.20 of the *Crown Land Management Act 2016* (NSW) from the Ballina Shire Council (as Crown Land Manager) for the purpose of access through a reserve, sporting and organised recreational activities, and storage. In relation to Lot 560 on DP1119965, the applicant holds a lease under the *Real Property Act 1910* (NSW) for a term of 25 years.

**Order sought by Applicant:** That native title does not exist in or in respect of the land contained within the following land titles: (a) Lot 5611 in DP1282979; and (b) Lot 560 in DP1119965.

**Description of area:** The application covers approx. 0.52 Ha, being land parcels Lot 5611 in DP128279 and Lot 560 in DP1119965 within Hampton Park in the township of Ballina.

**Relevant LGA:** Ballina Shire Council



**Applicant’s name:** INA Operations Pty Limited

**Federal Court File No:** NSD338/2025

**Non-native title interest:** The applicant holds a short-term licence under section 2.20 of the *Crown Land Management Act 2016* (NSW) from the Nambucca Valley Council (as Crown Land Manager) for the purpose of holiday accommodation and site investigations.

**Order sought by Applicant:** (1) Protection under section 24FA of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) be granted in respect of the land described in Schedule A [of the application]. (2) Such further or other orders as the Court deems necessary.

**Description of area:** The application area covers a combined area of about 0.36 ha and is located within Lot 7016 on DP1056524 in the town of Nambucca Heads.

**Relevant LGA:** Nambucca Valley Council

For assistance and any further information about these applications, including the description of the area, call Jake Ellis on (07) 3052 4189 or visit [www.nntt.gov.au](http://www.nntt.gov.au).



NSW Environmental Trust Healthy Country Technical Review Committee - Call for Applications

The NSW Environmental Trust are looking for people willing to share their expertise and knowledge of Country and cultural practices to become members of the Healthy Country Technical Review Committee.

The purpose of this Committee is to advise the NSW Environmental Trust on major projects that prioritise healthy Country and recognise and value Aboriginal peoples, their traditional knowledge and practices and connection to Country, and to provide ongoing guidance to projects throughout their lifecycle.

The NSW Environmental Trust provide grants to the community, government, non-government organisations and industry to deliver projects that will help to restore, protect and enhance the NSW environment.

Your time and knowledge is valued and this is a paid position.

**Applications now open.**

**Applications close 5pm Wednesday, 4 June 2025.**

**Contact the Trust**

For further information about the committee or how to apply please visit [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/healthy-country-trc](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/healthy-country-trc) or contact Emily from the Trust on (02) 8229 2895 or email [info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au).

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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	25/659	MIRAMAR (GOLDFIELDS) PTY LTD	29BL	60.6km NE'ly of Kambalda	Lat: 30° 50' S: Long: 122° 8' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Exploration Licence	27/747	DYNAMIC METALS LIMITED	10BL	51.6km E'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 19' S: Long: 121° 50' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Exploration Licence	27/748	DYNAMIC METALS LIMITED	3BL	54.2km E'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 21' S: Long: 121° 52' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Exploration Licence	28/3510	MIRAMAR (GOLDFIELDS) PTY LTD	15BL	67km NE'ly of Kambalda	Lat: 30° 53' S: Long: 122° 15' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Exploration Licence	47/5267	YOUNG, Bradford John	19BL	25.3km NE'ly of Whim Creek	Lat: 20° 44' S: Long: 118° 3' E	PORT HEDLAND TOWN
Exploration Licence	51/2270	NEWFOUND PROSPECTING PTY LTD	4BL	49.7km SE'ly of Peak Hill	Lat: 25° 52' S: Long: 119° 9' E	MEEKATHARRA SHIRE
Exploration Licence	77/3197	STRANGE, Vernon Wesley	4BL	157.4km N'ly of Southern Cross	Lat: 29° 48' S: Long: 119° 17' E	MENZIES SHIRE
Prospecting Licence	24/5838	COMPLETE PROSPECTING PTY LTD	176.86HA	4.3km W'ly of Ora Banda	Lat: 30° 22' S: Long: 121° 1' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5843	MAHONEY, Reece Anthony	149.29HA	18.4km N'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 17' S: Long: 121° 15' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	24/5844	FLEMING, Leo Glenn	6.40HA	14.1km SW'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 30' S: Long: 121° 11' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4818	COMPLETE PROSPECTING PTY LTD	194.67HA	29.4km NE'ly of Kambalda	Lat: 31° 0' S: Long: 121° 52' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4819	COMPLETE PROSPECTING PTY LTD	163.01HA	28.8km NE'ly of Kambalda	Lat: 31° 0' S: Long: 121° 52' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4820	COMPLETE PROSPECTING PTY LTD	200.20HA	29.3km NE'ly of Kambalda	Lat: 31° 0' S: Long: 121° 53' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4821-S	STEHN, Anthony Paterson	4.83HA	31.2km NE'ly of Kambalda	Lat: 31° 1' S: Long: 121° 55' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	26/4828	GOLDTIMERS PROSPECTING PTY LTD	194.57HA	19km SE'ly of Kalgoorlie	Lat: 30° 51' S: Long: 121° 37' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY
Prospecting Licence	27/2619	GUISE, David Johnathan	195.20HA	43.8km E'ly of Broad Arrow	Lat: 30° 21' S: Long: 121° 46' E	KALGOORLIE-BOULDER CITY

**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: 7 May 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 **7 August 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. **7 September 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 km²

DMIRS\_26038





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
57/1257	REDSCOPE ENTERPRISES PTY LTD	726193	109.47HA	102.6km SW'ly of Sandstone	Lat: 28° 47' S: Long: 118° 46' E	SANDSTONE SHIRE

Nature of the act: Grant of amalgamation applications which authorises the applicant to explore for minerals.

Notification day: 7 May 2025

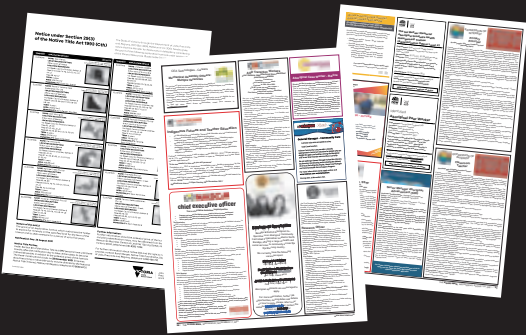
Native title parties: Under Section 30 of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth), persons have until 3 months after the notification day to take certain steps to become native title parties in relation to the applications. The 3 month period closes on 7 August 2025. Any person who is, or becomes a native title 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. 7 September 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.

DMIRS\_26040

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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
Mining Lease	77/1312	WILLIAMS, Kevin Andrew	170.46HA	10.7km S'ly of Southern Cross	Lat: 31° 19' S: Long: 119° 19' E	YILGARN SHIRE

Nature of the act: Grant of mining leases, which authorises the applicant to mine for minerals for a term of 21 years from notification of grant and a right of renewal for 21 years.

Notification day: 7 May 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 7 August 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. The mining tenements may be granted if, by the end of the period of 4 months after the notification day (i.e. 7 September 2025), there is no native title party under section 30 of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) in relation to the area of the mining tenements. 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.

DMIRS 26039

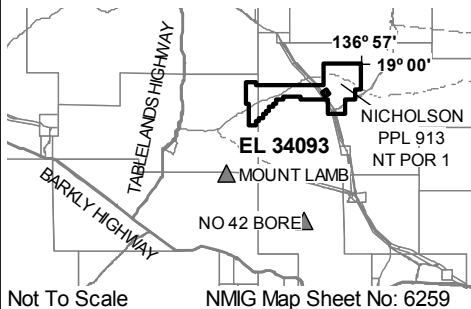
NOTICE OF PROPOSED GRANT OF EXPLORATION LICENCES

NATIVE TITLE ACT 1993 (CTH) SECTION 29

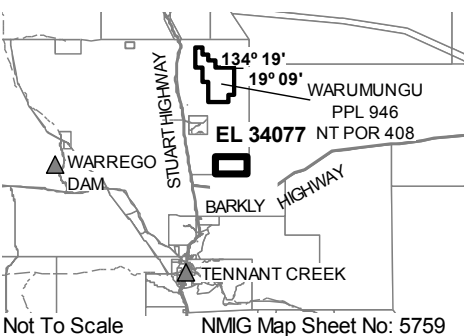
The Honourable Gerard Maley MLA, the Northern Territory Minister for Mining and Energy, C/- Department of Mining and Energy, GPO Box 4550 DARWIN NT 0801, hereby gives notice in accordance with section 29 of the Native Title Act 1993 (Commonwealth) of his intent to do an act, namely to grant the following exploration licence applications.

Applications to which this notice applies:

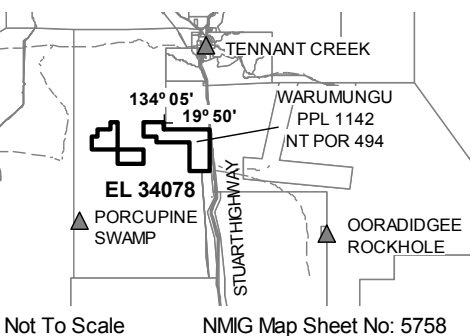
Exploration Licence 34093 sought by BAUDIN RESOURCES PTY LTD, ACN 618 455 593 over an area of 250 Blocks (806 km²) depicted below for a term of 6 years, within the ALEXANDRIA Locality.



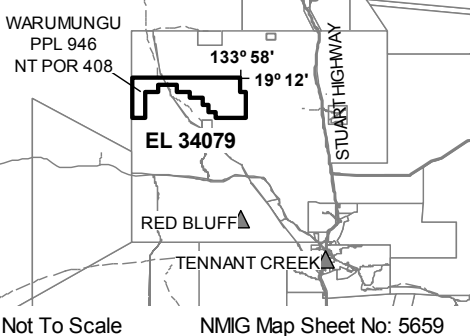
Exploration Licence 34077 sought by CALATOS PTY LTD, ACN 144 618 708 over an area of 42 Blocks (129 km²) depicted below for a term of 6 years, within the FLYNN locality.



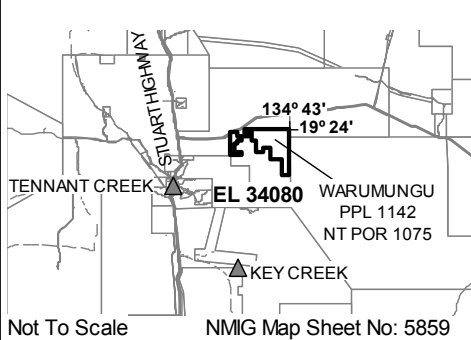
Exploration Licence 34078 sought by CALATOS PTY LTD, ACN 144 618 708 over an area of 53 Blocks (169 km²) depicted below for a term of 6 years, within the TENNANT CREEK locality.



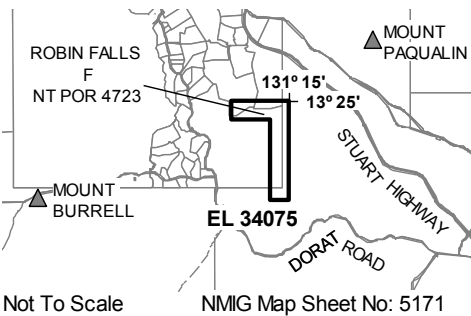
Exploration Licence 34079 sought by CALATOS PTY LTD, ACN 144 618 708 over an area of 66 Blocks (214 km²) depicted below for a term of 6 years, within the SHORT RANGE locality.



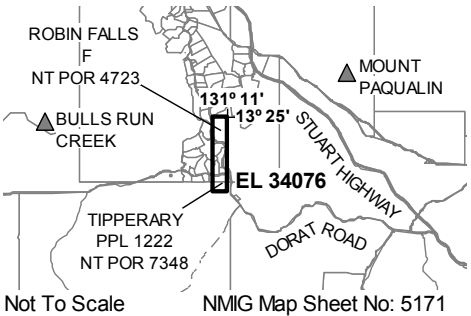
Exploration Licence 34080 sought by CALATOS PTY LTD, ACN 144 618 708 over an area of 88 Blocks (285 km²) depicted below for a term of 6 years, within the BARKLY locality.



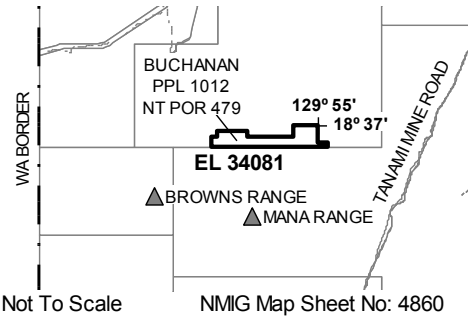
Exploration Licence 34075 sought by LITHIUM DEVELOPMENTS PTY LTD, ACN 612 245 020 over an area of 7 Blocks (24 km²) depicted below for a term of 6 years, within the BATCHELOR locality.



Exploration Licence 34076 sought by LITHIUM DEVELOPMENTS PTY LTD, ACN 612 245 020 over an area of 5 Blocks (17 km²) depicted below for a term of 6 years, within the BATCHELOR locality.



Exploration Licence 34081 sought by PURE EXPLORATION PTY LTD, ACN 669 443 636 over an area of 60 Blocks (196 km²) depicted below for a term of 6 years, within the WARE locality.



Nature of act(s): The grant of an exploration licence under the Mineral Titles Act 2010 authorises the holder to conduct activities in connection with exploration for minerals for a term not exceeding 6 years and to seek renewal(s). The term for which it is intended to grant the mineral exploration licences referred to in this notice commences from the date of grant. Further information about the act may be obtained from the Department of Mining and Energy, GPO Box 4550 Darwin NT 0801 or Centrepont Building 48-50 Smith Street Darwin NT 0800, telephone (08) 8999 5322.

Native Title Parties: Any person who is, or becomes a "native title party" within the meaning of the Native Title Act 1993 is entitled to the negotiation and/or procedural rights provided in Part 2, Division 3, Subdivision P of the Native Title Act 1993. Under section 30 of the Native Title Act 1993, persons have until 3 months after the notification day to take certain steps to become native title parties in relation to this notice. Enquiries concerning becoming a native title party should be directed to the National Native Title Tribunal, GPO Box 9973, Brisbane QLD 4001, or telephone (07) 3307 5000.

Expedited Procedure: The Northern Territory Government considers that the acts are acts attracting the expedited procedure as defined in section 237 of the Native Title Act 1993. The exploration licences referred to in this notice may be granted unless an objection is made by a native title party to the statement that the act is one which attracts the expedited procedure. Such an objection must be made to the National Native Title Tribunal within 4 months of the notification day.

Notification Day: 7 May 2025



# All Blacks win the inaugural

By MAXINE HICKS



THE Wiradjuri All Blacks won the inaugural Arthur Musso Hooper Shield on Saturday, April 19, at Brewarrina's first rugby league Knockabout carnival, which featured nine men's and two women's teams.

The carnival and shield is held in memory of the late Arthur Musso Hooper, the founder of the Barwon United Swans RLFC established in 1984 in Brewarrina.

The All Blacks won the 2025 Knockabout final against the Swans 30-6.

Hosted by the Swans, the shield was initiated and dedicated in honour of Arthur Musso Hooper by his grandchildren and other family members to keep his legacy alive.

The Barwon United Swans club wasn't accepted into the NSW Group 15 rugby-league competition until 1987.

The local league community, particularly a committee formed by Gerold Weatherall, Pam Boney Weatherall, Essie Coffey, Glen Boney and Roslyn Jackson, had lobbied to get the club established.

The club was for everyone, not just Aboriginal people, and many players came from the reserves that couldn't get a game with the town side, called the Brewarrina Golden Googars.

Players came from all over the western NSW district including Bourke, Walgett, Weilmoringle, Enngonia and Goodooga just to attend the carnival and play for the Swans.

They slept in their cars, tents, the bus they travelled in, the river banks of different communities or families' backyards.

It was the first Knockabout carnival to be held at Brewarrina, and started with a smoking ceremony by Chris Boney and dance opening by the Ngungulanha. Teams that played in the carnival were: Barwon United Swans, Robbie's Bulldogs, Wiradjuri All Blacks, Patsy Hooper Memorial, Bourke Warriors Next Generation, Enngonia Outlaws, West Magpies and Dodge City Family.

An exhibition game was played by women's teams the Barwon Swans and Bush Queen Memorial, who played out a draw.

Trophy winners were: Player of the carnival Ethan Beryene; Rising Talent Malakye Biles; Best Back Jason Boney; and Best Forward Manassah Timur.

The Knockabout was deemed by organisers as a massive success.

The younger generation were entertained with face painting and a huge jumping castle organised by volunteers from Dubbo, Sydney and Newcastle and a live podcast on the day was presented by Shaun Skuthorpe.





# Arthur Musso Hooper Shield



Great action shots from on the day.  
Photos Maxine Hicks.





# 25 First Nations icons in '25

## Cathy Freeman

With more than two decades as a correspondent with the *Koori Mail*, PETER ARGENT is looking back on the sporting careers of Indigenous stars across the wide world of sport across the 2025 calendar year.

In thoroughbred horse racing, pundits talk about 'the race that stops a nation' on the first Tuesday in November.

However, at the Sydney 2000 Olympics, an Aboriginal woman from Queensland brought this country to a stand-still, delivering one of the great performances in track and field, etching herself into athletics and Australian sporting immortality by winning the 400 metres gold medal.

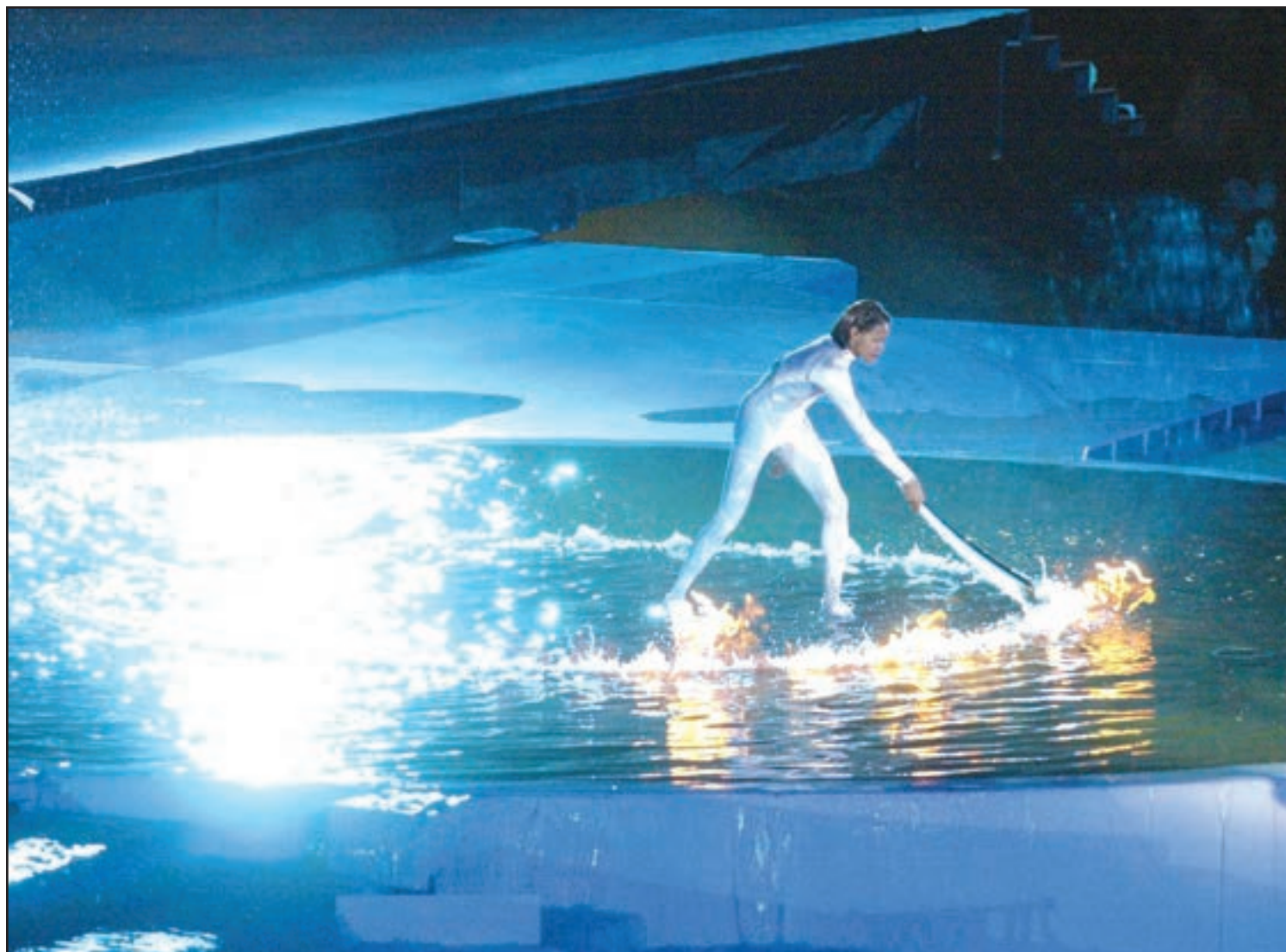
Catherine Astrid Salome Freeman, born on February 16, 1973, in Mackay, North Queensland, is widely known as Cathy Freeman. She is of Kuku-yanji and Birri-gubba heritage. Freeman is one in a family of five siblings: brothers Gavin, Garth, and Norman, and an older sister, Anne-Marie, who was born in 1966 and passed away in 1990 due to cerebral palsy.

Freeman's victory in the women's 400 metres at the 2000 Summer Olympics marked the pinnacle of her career. She also had the honour of lighting the Olympic Flame during the opening ceremony. Freeman won the Olympic title with a time of 49.11 seconds, becoming only the second Australian Indigenous Olympic champion. Following her victory, she carried both the Aboriginal and Australian flags during her victory lap, despite restrictions against displaying non-national flags at the Olympic Games.

Freeman made history as the first Indigenous Australian person to become a Commonwealth Games gold medallist in 1990, while still in her mid-teens, as part of the winning 4 x 100 metres sprint relay team in Auckland, New Zealand.

At the 1994 Commonwealth Games in Canada, she secured gold medals in both the 200 metres and 400 metres finals.

She also won a silver medal at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta,



Australia's Cathy Freeman ignited the Olympic Flame to open the Sydney 2000 Games and returned 10 nights later to win a gold medal in the 400 metres. She was the first Aboriginal person from Australia to win an individual Olympic gold. And she celebrated in a bare-foot victory lap with an Australian flag and the red, black and yellow Australian Aboriginal flag together in her hand. (AAP)

USA, behind French athlete Marie-Jose Pérec, recording an Australian record time of 48.63 seconds.

After taking a break due to injury in 1998, Freeman returned to competition with a victory in the 400-metre final at the 1999 World Championships in Seville, maintaining an undefeated record throughout the season. She had previously won her first World Championship 400-metre race in Athens in 1997.

Throughout her career, Freeman was the Australian Champion in the 400-metre discipline six times (1995, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2003) and the national 200 metre champion in 1991, 1994, and 1996.

She was part of the 4 x 400 metre gold medal winning team at the 2002 Commonwealth Games and announced her retirement from athletics in 2003.

Freeman's achievements have been recognised with numerous accolades, including Young Australian of the Year (1990), Australian of the Year (1998), an Australian Sports Medal (2000), and Centenary

Medal (2001). She received the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in 2001. In the same year, Freeman was awarded the Olympic Order by Juan Antonio Samaranch and honoured with the Arthur Ashe Courage Award. She was named Sportswoman of the Year at the Laureus World Sports Awards in 2001 and Female Sportsperson of the Year at the 2003 Deadlys. Freeman was inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame in 2005 and Queensland's Sport Hall of Fame in 2009. During the "Q150 celebrations" in 2009, Freeman was acknowledged as one of the Q150 Icons of Queensland for her contributions as a sports legend.

In 2007, Freeman established the Cathy Freeman Foundation, which has since undergone name changes to Community Spirit Foundation and later to Murrup.

**Footnote:** The inaugural First Nations Olympic gold medallist was Freeman's 4 x 400 teammate, Nova Peris-Kneebone, who won her gold medal in field hockey four years earlier in Atlanta.





# Gazing into the Origin crystal ball

Last fortnight's edition of the *Koori Mail* had my selections for NSW Origin 17 for the opening game in the 2025 State of Origin series.

Like I stated in that edition of the newspaper, I've dusted off the trusty, but often faulty, crystal ball to now throw out my 17 for the Queensland side that may play in the opening match in Brisbane on Wednesday May 28.

1. With Brisbane fullback Reece Walsh on the sidelines through injury, his Broncos teammate Selwyn Cobbo comes into that spot for the Maroons. At the time of writing, Cobbo has played 8 games with 5 tries for Brisbane and his attacking flair is coming at the right time for Queensland. Can be a handy goalkicker too.

2. Xavier Coates is big, strong and fast. He is one of the best finishers in the game and his ability to score tries from impossible moments is unmatched. 10 tries have come his way already for Queensland and he is sure to add more in 2025.

3. Valentine Holmes has been a top buy for St George-Illawarra and has been one of their best



**Kris Flanders**

players in what's been a tough start for 2025 for the Dragons. But his big game experience, quality goal kicking along with speed and size means he has to be there.

4. The Dolphins' Hamiso Tabuai-Fidow is the man for the job. His 2025 form has been outstanding for the Dolphins and his broken play running could cause plenty of problems for the Blues. 'The Hammer' knows how to find the tryline and he is already right at home in the Origin arena having scored 9 tries in just 7 appearances.

5. Murray Taulagi from the North Queensland Cowboys has already played 6 Origin matches

and he should add to that tally this year. Murray is a big strong winger with good pace and a great try scorer in clubland with the Cowboys, 55 from 100 matches.

6. Cameron Munster picks himself for the Maroons side. A natural leader for his state side, Munster, is a gun five-eighth and can make things happen on the field. Plus he brings that niggly, Queenslanders love him while New South Welshmen may think otherwise. However, his 18 matches for Queensland speaks volumes of what he brings at this level.

7. Daly Cherry-Evans. DCE is Queensland. He has played in 25 games and knows what winning is all about at this elite level. Forms a lethal halves combination with Munster and he will likely be the captain again.

8. Reuben Cotter. The Cowboys haven't had the greatest start to the NRL year but Cotter is one of the game's best forwards. At Origin for Queensland, he has proven to be a reliable machine. Tackles anything Blue...runs through anything Blue. Has the ability to play a full 80 minutes from the prop position.

9. If Harry Grant comes back from injury that has kept him out for a few rounds at club level with Melbourne, then he gets a start every day of the week. A crafty hooker who injects himself with quick runs from dummy-half and a knack of crashing over from close range. His previous Origin experience will prove valuable.

10. Patrick Carrigan. Like his prop teammate, Reuben Cotter, Carrigan is damaging with the ball and loves the physicality. Is built for Origin footy and will again be a handful for the NSW forwards. Been great for Brisbane in the NRL.

11. Tom Gilbert is the Dolphins captain and should bring some of his leadership qualities to the Queensland campaign. He's been one of the best for the Redcliffe based club and Gilbert is a strong worker and defensively very sound.

12. Cory Horsburgh. The big red from the Green Machine in Canberra played for the Maroons in one game back in 2023. But his current form is way superior to his last Origin outing. Has been brutal for the Raiders, one of the reasons, they're sitting high up the

NRL ladder this year. Would bring that same dynamic to Queensland.

13. Tino Fa'asuamaleaui. The big fella is primed for a big series. He craves the rough and tumble of rugby league. Already a big unit...will only grow when he pulls on that Maroons jersey.

14. Beau Farmor. Brings so much energy into the Gold Coast Titans side and can replicate that in Origin. Great speed for a forward and can score tries too.

15. J'maine Hopgood. His club, Parramatta, might be down the ladder but Hopgood brings it every week. Got a taste of Origin football last year and showed what he's capable of. Deserves another crack.

16. Jaydn Su'A. Was named for Game One and Two of last years series. Has been in good form for the Dragons this season. Brings size, speed and energy off the interchange bench.

17. Tom Dearden. Good for the Cowboys again this year and is a genuine playmaker for that side. Has played 4 Origins previously and would do the job again for his state.

## From Dubbo to Parramatta

By KRIS FLANDERS



IT'S been an unbelievable ride for Taneka Todhunter as she chases her NRLW dreams. The 22-year-old will run out again for the Parramatta Eels in their 2025 campaign and add to her tally of 13 games.

"When I think about finally playing NRLW, it gives me goosebumps, because I know what I've had to do to get here. To think that I'm now playing with and against the best of the best is crazy and now I'm so excited about the new year, I definitely think that we are building something to be a force to be reckoned with. This team has a strong connection and we want to be better every game," Todhunter said.

The crafty hooker played 9 matches for the Eels last year and was instrumental in helping to turn the fortunes around for the western Sydney club. Parra finished just outside the top 4 and Todhunter believes her side is capable of climbing even further up the ladder this season.

In return, the Eels have seen enough of what Todhunter brings to the side as they extended her contract till the end of 2026.

"I just love this place, they're definitely a family club, which is good for me. Their values align with my values and they've invested so much into the women's game as well. We aren't pushed to the side here, the NRLW side is along for the ride with the men," Todhunter said.

"I think I bring some real knowledge now, I think I've learnt a lot more about the game now from when I first debuted. Especially with Georgie (Steve Georgallis – Parramatta Coach) he's brought so many new aspects out in my game."

A rising talent, Todhunter has already collected representative jerseys for her state as she played Under 19s for NSW Country and Under 19s NSW State of Origin in 2021. In 2023, she was also selected in the Prime Minister's XIII for the match against Papua New Guinea.

The Wiradjuri woman has also pulled on the colours for her family and people in the Indigenous All Stars the past two years. An



**Taneka Todhunter playing for the Parramatta Eels in the 2025 campaign.**

experience that she will cherish forever with the chance to come together with her football sisters.

"I know everyone probably says this, but it's the best week of the year, other than the Koori Knockout. It's good because our culture is recognised and we get to live and breathe it, going out to communities and engaging with Mob. But also hearing the stories from other players about who they are and where they're from, it fills my cup for the year to be involved. The game is a whole other level and so intense but our dances and the Haka before from the Maori girls gives me chills and I tear up just thinking about it," Todhunter said.

Hailing from Dubbo in western NSW, Todhunter, grew up around football from watching her father and uncles play and tackling her brothers in backyard games of footy.

It's a game that she's been passionate about all her life.

"My family are all very big into footy, I remember being very young and dad showing us how to tackle. Watching others play and us kids having little games on the sidelines. I wanted to play with boys but I was so tiny that my parents weren't keen on that, little did they know that I was hurting

the boys playing backyard footy," Todhunter laughs.

"I even forged my Mum's signature once to play in a school competition, just to play, I don't condone others doing that. But I just loved footy, I was a natural footy head, I played with the Wiradjuri Goannas back home too and then trialled and was picked for the Western Rams open team and Jess Skinner (Indigenous All Stars and Jillaroos Coach) was my first representative coach."

Todhunter is one of twelve siblings and she credits that large family for all nurturing her rugby league talents and driving countless hours and kilometres to get her to football games locally and in Sydney when required before making the permanent move to play Tarsha Gale Cup with the Roosters.

That family supports and ties us something that's never lost on Todhunter.

"I wouldn't be where I am today without their help. My grandparents drove me to many of my games in Sydney 3 times a week from Dubbo and we basically worked out a schedule between my parents and my grandparents as to whom would get me there. In fact, my grandparents still travel to see every game that I play, so they're still doing that for me," Todhunter says.

"There were times in 2022 when I didn't

think I was going to make it. I was living in Sydney and so far away from my Mob, you know what blackfellas are like and I'm very family orientated, I fell away from my footy and my training there for a while because I was in a depressive state. But it was my family that motivated me and thinking of the young girls and boys back home who want to do something with their lives and break generational cycles. I needed to do it for them and be the person they can see to aspire to."

Playing alongside Todhunter in the Parramatta forward pack is dual international and current captain, Mahalia Murphy. The youngster says to be on the same field as Murphy and all the experience she brings is something she's learning from every day.

Todhunter has nothing but praise for her Eels skipper who is also her housemate.

"She's honestly an inspiration, she's so good, her footy brain is amazing. But her life knowledge too, you can go to her and speak about anything, she's someone you can turn to. A very open person, you can have a laugh with her but serious when she needs to be, a great leader for us," Todhunter said.

It's not just on the football ground where Todhunter is excelling either.

Away from the rough and tumble of her sport, Todhunter, is also tackling studies and employment opportunities. In 2024, the Parra hooker was named as NRLW Vocational Player of the Year.

Education is something she's serious about and wanting to be a role model in a different light for her family and Mob.

"So I work in civil construction as a labourer but I can also operate the machinery plants too. I've done my Cert 3 and got those tickets there and then I'll be doing my Cert 4 for other opportunities in that space. It's so important I think to have skills and abilities outside of football, because you can't do this forever and you never know what's going to happen. I want to show my siblings and other youth back home that you can achieve anything, not just in footy, it could be in further education or the workforce," Todhunter said.



# Bobby's big deal

By PETER ARGENT



THE 2023 Norm Smith Medallist with Whadjuk-Ballardong Noongar

heritage, Ian Hill – known through the AFL football fraternity as “Bobby” – wants to be a Magpie for the remainder of his football life.

Already contracted with Collingwood until the end of 2026, the 25-year-old Hill explained now was the right time to recommit for the extra four seasons.

“I’m excited to sign on and stoked to be hanging around at the Pies. It feels like home here,” Hill said.

“My family loves it, especially my son, he loves it, running around like he owns the place.

“Collingwood is my future, and I can’t wait to spend the rest of my career here.

“Getting the taste of premiership success in 2023, that’s what drives me to want to play more footy here at the Pies in front of our big fan base.

“From now to 2030, I’d love to achieve more premiership success, but I really just want to keep playing consistent footy and making more memories to cherish for the

rest of my life.”

First drafted to the GWS Giants back in 2019, Western Australian Hill was traded to Collingwood ahead of the 2023 campaign having played 41 games.

Taking his game to an elite level since joining the Magpies, Hill quickly became a vital cog in the Collingwood side, with a breakout performance in the 2023 AFL Grand Final.

In 2024 he won the Magpies leading goal-kicker award and his highlights package also included last seasons’ AFL Mark of the Year against North Melbourne in round 14 at Marvel Stadium, winning the Alex Jesaulenko Medal.

Hill soared above the Kangaroos pair of Jackson Archer and Charlie Comben, along with team Billy Frampton at the top of the goal-square to take an incredible mark.

Back in May 2022, Hill was diagnosed with testicular cancer. After he had surgery he spent the rest of that year recovering.

As at round eight of the current season, Hill has played 95 AFL games and injury not withstanding will join the AFL 100-game club by the end of May.



Bobby Hills celebrates a big goal in Collingwood's six point win over St Kilda, 2023.

## What's the issue with being Welcomed?

The recent election has seen our cultures and people used as weapons within the political campaigns.

When people in positions of power get minority groups to fight within, they win. What we saw in the election period was an attack on the Welcomes to Country, when they should have been talking about the important and real issues in our communities.

Welcomes have been a big part of the AFL for years now. They respectfully begin big celebrations, commemorative games and especially in the Sir Doug Nicholls rounds with an Acknowledgement of Country or a Welcome to Country.

Yes, Welcome to Countries are very different for many language groups and this is an ancient ceremonial practice which has been private and sacred, allowing one to pass thorough or stay safely in a Country that is not yours. We have also seen an evolution of Welcome to Countries in modern times, that is in my opinion as sacred in the intentions of travelling safely, acknowledging our old people and reflecting on the Country you must care for and respect.

Yes, it is also true that the eastern states were hugely impacted by colonisation and heartbreakingly there was a huge loss of culture, practices and traditions. When I moved from SA to Vic and I have said this before, I was shocked at how much was taken away and it took me years to understand.

In fact, I recently learnt that Narm/Melbourne was the fastest to be colonised in the history of colonisation, they had perfected the art of colonisation by then. I myself have witnessed the stories being shared by knowledge holders in recent years who were too afraid to share them.

My question to you is, how is this the fault of the Aboriginal people today, who are reclaiming their culture and language in the eastern states? How can you begrudge them a Welcome to Country that looks different to yours? We need empathy, not harmful comments as that is what these people want.

So, I was proud that after the Nazi display at the ANZAC Day memorial service and the NRL Melbourne Storm board cancelling theirs, the AFL still had Uncle Colin at the ANZAC Collingwood v Essendon game do his beautiful Welcome to Country. The crowd was silent and respectful.

It takes 2-5 mins to do a Welcome and if they get paid, they should, it is not a quiet Welcome on the banks of a river that we treasure, it is to 80,000 people in a stadium to remind them of the Country they stand on and the people that stood and cared for it before them, so they can today. Why is cultural knowledge so undervalued in our country? We value and pay for all kind of knowledge I don't see why Elders who do Welcomes in this modern manner, shouldn't be paid for their time and cultural knowledge too.

We have the up-and-coming Sir Doug Nicholls Round and we also have the election results to come that may impact Welcome to Countries and if they will even be a part of our future. So time will tell. I am one who hopes we take 2-5 mins at the start of the Sir Doug Nicholls games to reflect on the Country we stand, the old people who cared for Country and our responsibility to care for Country and as Aunt Joy Murphy always say “tread lightly.”



Shelley Ware

# Cochrane family exploring First Nations heritage

By PETER ARGENT



FATHER and son combination Stuart and Tom Cochrane are a couple of the latest additions to the AFL Indigenous fraternity.

Their First Nations heritage comes from the maternal side of Stuart's lineage.

From one of the most famous families at SANFL state-league level in the Central District Football Club's history, Stuart Cochrane was a 104-game AFL player, first playing 50 games with North Melbourne and a further 54 matches with the Power between '03 and '05.

He was originally drafted by the Kangaroos as a 16-year-old back in 1995, and made his AFL debut in the 1998 season.

“I was actually drafted in a unique way, as the clubs got compensation picks with Fremantle coming into the AFL,” Stuart Cochrane explained.

“I finished my schooling in Adelaide and moved across to Melbourne at 17.

“My first AFL game was against the Adelaide Crows and we had a win.

“A number of the boys from Central District drove across to Melbourne for Tommy's debut in round three, missing a club training.”

Stuart Cochrane moved back home to the SANFL Bulldogs in 2006, playing in Central District's Grand final loss to Woodville West Torrens.

His oldest son Tom Cochrane moved into AFL ranks at the end of 2024, collected by Port Adelaide in the 2024 AFL

rookie draft.

Secured with pick 13 in the 2024 Rookie Draft, Tom Cochrane is a midfielder-forward who boasts good hands and stoppage craft.

He was a member of the Central District Under 18s 2024 Grand Final team that heartbreakingly lost to Woodville-West Torrens.

From a playing perspective Tom Cochrane is noted as a player who can win his own ball in the contest and has power to break from traffic and the kicking skills to finish his work inside 50.

Tom made his AFL debut in round three this year against Essendon at the MCG, coming on as the tactical substitute and making an immediate impact.

Uniquely and showing amazing strength of character he is also the first player with Tourettes Syndrome to play AFL football.

After impressive performances in round five and six wins over Hawthorn during Gather Round and Sydney at the SCG, Cochrane endured a foot injury and frustratingly will be sidelined for a couple of months.

His younger brother Dougie, who also played alongside Tom in the Grand Final last year, won the Kevin Sheehan Medal as the best player in the Under 16s National championships.

He has been touted as a potential number one draft candidate at the 2026 AFL draft, being able to play both in a key position role or as a big-bodied midfielder.

Dougie has been likened in style to the two-time Brownlow medallist Adam Goodes, with his athleticism and

versatility.

The extended Cochrane family have a wonderful football CV.

This includes Stuart's father Richard senior, who played 174 league games from 1969 and younger brother Bill who played 172.

Stuart's brother Richie junior was a member of six Central District league premierships during the Bulldogs golden era in the 2000s.



Tom Cochrane.



# Fejo excels at juggling

By PETER ARGENT



JASMIN Fejo is currently managing motherhood alongside her dual sporting career. She plays SANFL Women's football for Sturt and NBL1 basketball with Woodville Warriors.

Her son, Brooklyn, is four years old.

This season, Fejo has played five matches for Sturt and competed against South Adelaide's Soriah Moon in their ANZAC round clash, achieving 16 disposals and 16 hit outs.

Sturt coach Michael O'Connor compares Fejo to former player Zoe Prowse, noting her athletic capabilities and advising improvement in her football craft and execution.

Although she missed a football game due to basketball commitments, Fejo has performed consistently in both sports.

Following a football match, she contributed significantly to an NBL1 basketball game with a 26-point tally, along with notable performances over ANZAC Day.

Fejo was previously associated with Adelaide Lightning and is drawing attention from AFLW recruiters as she progresses in her football career.

She has won championships with West Adelaide and Central District, under coach Vicki Dalby.

Dalby supports Fejo's participation in both sports, emphasising her fitness, speed, and defensive skills. Dalby is confident in Fejo's potential to become a regular WNBL player.



Jasmin Fejo is as comfortable on the football field as she is playing basketball. Pictures: Peter Argent.

# Age has not wearied Aaron

By ALF WILSON



AT age 35, Bamaga PLO Aaron Binawel is one of the oldest but still one of the most skilful rugby league players in the Torres Strait and NPA.

Evergreen Aaron's football CV is very impressive and includes being a member of winning grand final sides in the local Zenadth Kes club competition on Waiben, Foley Shield appearances for Torres/Cape and Innisfail/Eacham, being a Northern United representative, and numerous appearances at Island of Origin and Zenadth Kes carnivals amongst others.

He also played for the Northern United team which beat Queensland Outback on TI, and in the Kulpiyam side which won a the Murri Knockout at Redcliffe.

Born on Thursday Island, the classy utility player started 2025 in style and lined up for the Roosters which won the FNQ Challenge in Cairns recently.

"I played at lock early on and then at five eighth in the final," he said.

The *Koori Mail* spoke to Aaron to get an insight into his distinguished footy career.



Aaron Binawel about to score a try at an Island of Origin series on Badu.

I asked what schools he had attended as a youngster.

"Early on I went to Dauan Island Primary and then moved to Cairns and later attended St Brendan's College at Yeppoon," he said.

Aaron started his senior rugby league in 2007 for Waiben Roosters and has played with them when living around the Torres Strait.

He lined up Torres/Cape which

reached the 2009 grand final of the prestigious Foley Shield in Townsville which they lost 32-22 to Innisfail/Eacham.

"I later played for the Innisfail Leprechauns in the Cairns and District comp and represented Innisfail/Eacham in the 2011 Foley Shield," he said.

Aaron played in Roosters club premiership sides on Waiben in 2018, 21 and 22 and also in 2024 when they were eliminated in the

semi finals.

Admitting to having rugby league in his blood, Aaron has also played at numerous Island of Origin and Zenadth Kes carnivals for teams such as Western Bears, Kulpiyam, Saguci, Magun Warriors, Waiben Stingers, Mura Buai and Roxin Eagles.

A proud Torres Strait islander, Aaron played for the NPA Bulls in the northern zone of the Cape Cluster competition.

So who are amongst the best TS players Aaron has been teammates of or an opponent?

"They would have to be Joe Tamwoy, my current Roosters coach Terence Yusia snr and the late and great Danny Mosby. They were all champions," he said.

Rugby league is a genuine family affair for Aaron with his older brother James, who now lives on Moa Island, and his younger brother Kearney being involved.

Aaron and James were members of the winners Torres Stingers side at the 2014 FNQ Challenge in Cairns.

Now his 14-year-old son Jahlias is showing great promise as a footballer and looks set to be a chip off the old block.

"He goes to Southport High School and plays down there for Tigers in the local comp," Aaron said.

Aaron is gearing up for the 2025 local ZKRL season and will again be in Roosters colours.

So how many more years does Aaron think he will play rugby league for, before father time catches up with him?

"I reckon there is another three or four years in the tank but after that I can see the light of retirement," he said.



# Johnson: on the record

By KRIS FLANDERS



THE year was 2003.

At an athletics meeting in Mito, Japan, Patrick Johnson ran the 100m in a time of 9.93 seconds shattering the 10s barrier and creating an Australian and Oceania race record that still stands 25 years later.

He was the first person not of African ancestry to break the 10-second barrier.

Johnson remembers the race like it was yesterday.

"There was a real sense of relief, to be able to prove that I could do it legally, previously I ran 9.98 in Perth and the wind was a 3m tailwind, the conditions were never for me. I just wanted to go out there in Japan and run well and run to my abilities. A lot of it was mental, obviously physically you have to be ready but for me, it was about doing my normal routine. You know, I had a coffee that morning with Kyle Vander-Kuyp (Olympic hurdler), it was good to have the brother there. Had my blueberries, I love them, just going back to basics really and doing what I love, Johnson recalled.

"I actually proved that it didn't matter where you're from, or your background, that with passion and consistency you can achieve anything. Proud to represent my people and country and Queensland, but to also show that an Australian sprinter could break that 10 second goal."

Looking back, the 53-year-old says the record was a wonderful achievement to break and he's proud that it's stood for over 20 years now, something he didn't think would last this long.

"I didn't even know at the time that it was a record, because the Japanese media all rushed onto the track for their runner in the race, I thought hang on didn't I win? I never thought it would stand for so many years because of the different types of athletes and the training and new methods.

"I was never cocky or super arrogant, like some athletics sprinters can be, I just did a job and did what I trained hard to do. You've got respect the sport and you've got respect the event of 100m running."

A proud Kaanju (Lockhart River) man from Far North Queensland, Patrick says that being the Australian 100m record holder has enabled him to stay in the athletics arena and also become a public figure inspiring others, particularly young Indigenous people.

"Getting the record didn't change the way I ever conducted myself, it was different in the way people saw me, it never changed the person I was. I do what I do for our people, for Queenslanders and for Australians, Johnson said.

"That's a simple thing to do, you never forget that connection to Country and culture or to help others. That creates a new space and a new reality for people to challenge themselves or challenge what the norm might be.

Being a positive person and we all need to be the change that we want to see."

There's an old saying that records are meant to be broken.

Johnson believes if his 25-year-old record does fall he won't be sad and will rejoice in the achievements of whomever that runner is.

"I'll be relieved and very proud and happy that we now have more than just one Australian sprinter who's broken that 10 second barrier and takes over my record. You know, records aren't meant to be held, it's what we aspire to and what we aspire to break. I'm really excited about the day when our sprinters will take over that mantle and set a new record themselves," Johnson said.

At the moment, there are Australian sprinters knocking on the door, with a view to breaking Johnson's long standing 100m record and claim the title as Australia's fastest man.

Teen sensation, Gout Gout, could possibly be the runner to get that record. At the recent Australian Athletics Championships in Perth WA, the long striding sprinter, stopped the clock on two occasions at 9.99s in the under-20 100m but were both wind assisted, his personal best is 10.17.

"Gout Gout is an incredible talent and it's great to watch him run. Whilst it's great to have the hype we must also remember that he's still very young and has a lot of growing to do and that we must also support him. There will be trials and tribulations so we must make sure that we protect them. I caught up with him recently and I just said to him just keep doing what you love and remember the reason you started this journey, don't do it for anyone else, just do it for yourself. When you do what you love, regardless of the result, you will always give your best," Johnson said.

The other threats to Johnson's Australian 100m record is Lachie Kennedy and Rohan Browning.

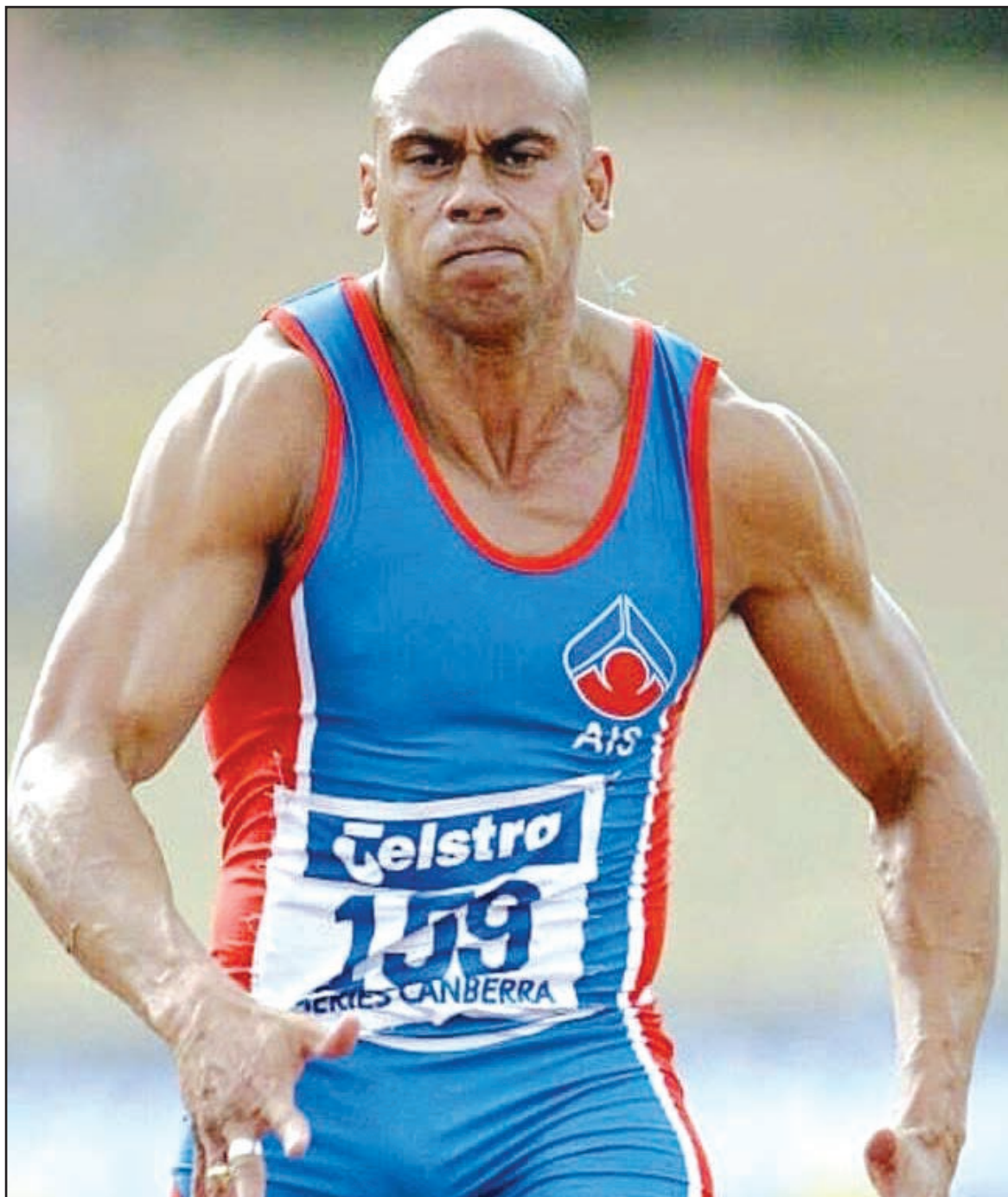
The fleet-footed Johnson says it's a great time in Australian athletics and that having a healthy competition is brilliant for the sport.

"You always need heat and competition, you need that healthy rivalry, without it sometimes it's a false reality. Here in Australia, we are a small country compared to some of the others, the talent and ability across the globe is insane. So we have to do our best back home here to nurture that talent and bring it through. I think it's great to see what the current crop are doing and what they could achieve," Johnson said.

Until that time comes, the current Australian 100m record holder is happy that athletics is being spoke about and more eyes are on the track-and-field events.

Johnson reflects on what was a wonderful career and a sport that took him around Australia and around the globe competing at some of the biggest competitions like the Commonwealth Games, World Championships and Olympic Games.

"When I look back at myself as a young kid who grew up on a



Patrick Johnson.

boat and never did athletics before and then become the fastest man in the world at the time and then the fastest Australian man, I'm very proud and honoured. I did something that I was passionate about and achieved things that were previously seen as unachievable, Johnson said.

"I'm not unique, I just got an opportunity and I did the best that I could with the opportunity that life gave me."







There was plenty of action in the red dust of the desert. Pictures Guy McLean

# Eagles desert stylin' in Papunya

By GUY MCLEAN



**PAPUNYA**  
Eagles  
appear on  
track for  
another  
strong  
showing in the

Central Australian Football  
League's Community  
Competition after  
overcoming fierce rival  
Yuendumu in a thriller on  
the red dust of the western  
desert.

Papunya Oval played  
host to two games in  
round two, with Mount  
Allen Eagles overcoming  
Areyonga Tigers, before  
the Eagles hosted the  
Magpies in a game for the  
ages.

Papunya was coming  
off a narrow round 1 defeat  
to Western Arrente  
Bulldogs, whom the  
Eagles defeated to claim  
last year's premiership and  
back-to-back bragging  
rights.

In a see-sawing affair,  
Papunya drew on strong  
support from a vocal home  
crowd, holding off the fast-  
finishing Magpies to win  
by just four points. Man-  
mountain Waylon Manson  
was a key contributor,  
dominating in the ruck and  
up forward, while Marcus  
McDonald and Shane  
Inkamala oozed class,  
kicking goals and setting  
up others for teammates.

Papunya coach Franklin  
Anderson said he was  
thrilled his team prevailed,  
bringing happiness to the  
community.

"All the time when  
Papunya and Yuendumu  
play it's a fast game and all  
the team, especially some  
of the young fellas, they  
were great."



The Papunya Eagles, above, and their rivals Yuendumu Magpies below.







Olivia Kernick of the Blues is tackled during game one of the Women's State of Origin series between the Queensland Maroons and New South Wales Blues at Suncorp Stadium on May 1, in Brisbane. (Photo by Chris Hyde/Getty Images)

# Qld Maroons left feeling the Blues

By KRIS FLANDERS



NSW has struck a telling blow in the opening match of the three game State of Origin series for 2025 with a dominant 32-12 victory over Queensland in Brisbane in front of a record Women's Origin crowd of 26,022.

The Blues scored 6 tries to the Maroons 2.

However, at halftime the game was in the balance at 14-12 in favour of NSW, but a brutal second half from the Blues meant that the Maroons were totally shut down and didn't score another point after the break.

Indigenous All Star and NSW winger, Jaime Chapman, played the full 70 minutes. The Maroons had clearly done their homework on the speedy Chapman and limited the space around her to



Jaime Chapman of the Blues reacts during game one of the Women's State of Origin. Picture Getty Images.

produce her usual length of the field runs.

Chapman had 6 runs which produced 70m with 1 tackle bust. If she can get more ball in open pastures in Game Two in Sydney,

then it could be curtains for Queensland.

Fellow Indigenous All Star and the current Dally M Medal holder, Olivia Kernick, was at her workaholic best in the 20 point

win. Kernick made 26 tackles which was the equal highest for NSW alongside Yasmin Clydesdale.

Kernick played the full 70 minutes as well despite copping some knees to her sternum and ribs area which left her in some discomfort. But the tough lock-forward rallied on to also make 118m from her 13 runs, that was the 6th best for the Blues.

The Indigenous sisters representing Queensland can hold their heads high.

Tamika Upton, the game's best fullback and Maroons captain, made 79m from 12 runs with the ball. Upton looked dangerous at many stages in the match as she put through a number of kicks close to the line, only to come up short. However, the Blues will have to be aware of her in Sydney, as Upton is likely to produce something special in a must win game for Queensland.

Maroons prop-forward, Keilee Joseph, got through 53 minutes of hard yakka in the middle with 7 runs for 53m and she also produced 30 tackles. That tally was the second highest for Queensland, only behind fellow forward Sienna Lofipo who made 37 tackles.

Jasmine Peters, a Torres Strait Islander and four-time Indigenous All Star, made her State of Origin debut for Queensland. However, her night sadly ended just before halftime after a nasty head clash saw her come off the field for a HIA (Head Injury Assessment) which she failed meaning Peters was unable to return to action.

Until that point, the winger had 2 runs for 14m.

Game Two will be played in Sydney on Thursday 15th of May. The Blues can wrap up the series or the Maroons, like they did last year, win the match and send the series into a decider.