



# Koori Mail

*The Voice of Indigenous Australia*

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## Cultural Couture

First Nations designers showcase stunning creations on Cairns runway



AMID the industrial pillars and heritage charm of Tanks Arts Centre's Tank 5, the CIAF 2025 fashion performance *Look & Listen* made its debut, transforming the historic space into a runway of resistance, expression and unapologetic cultural pride. With two parts – *Look and Listen* – and one unified story, the performance brought together twelve First Nations designers, 16 models, and a powerful creative team to reflect the 2025 curatorial theme, *Pay Attention!*

- Continued page 32
- CIAF wrap, pages 31-33



Model Amariah Thomas Savage wearing a magnificent design from the 2 Sista's Strong designer collection (Irene Robinson and Darlene Fell).

## Landmark climate case dismissed

Torres Strait Islander men vow to keep fighting for their homelands – **Page 5**



INSIDE



NT Government racism charge

PAGE 7



Vale Uncle Peter Birch-Marshall

PAGE 21



Supporting racism victims

PAGE 51



25 First Nations icons in '25

PAGE 44

MY FAMILY

Sally Blanden (nee West) – Nipaluna



Sally Blanden with daughters Maggie and Allie and sister Wendy.

I am pictured here (on the left) with my daughters Maggie and Allie, and my sister Wendy.

Maggie had just delivered a speech 'Stealing Stories, Silencing Voices: Revolution & Silence'. She spoke the truth – and nailed it. I always learn from young ones – they challenge the narrative and are so articulate. I am so proud of them, as I am all my family.

Thinking back, our Gran (Ida West 1919-2003) made being vocal about the truth the norm. She would call anyone on their bullshit. I remember dropping into her place and there she is sitting with the premier of the day having a cuppa and telling him what for.

Still over twenty years later, I cry when I think of the significance of her loss. She kept our [extended] family connected. But it was bigger than that. We lost a connection that only her generation could bring, living in a time between old ways and modern life.

Although I have boxes of exercise books she has written in about living on Cape Barren and Flinders Islands, and we've got her [published] book and interviews, there were all the quiet old fellas, and we didn't capture enough, we didn't recognise the importance of their knowledge and stories. Losing people of her generation we lose so much of our history.

We come from a big family, on both sides. When I think of my dad and the aunties in my world, they all should still be alive, it's not fair, it's the impacts of colonisation on our bodies and minds.

My Auntie Lenna made sure one of us was weaving baskets – I'm so privileged, I

was no good at it, I'm so glad she was so bloody persistent with me. She would come to my house every Friday, and sit and weave and tell stories, and teach me to cook too, because I was a shit cook, and take me and show me where the reeds were and say you can't tell anybody. I miss her so much.

My siblings and I, and our kids are tight, very close – and our partners. Mum and I joke if anything happened between my brother Mark and his wife Gail, we'd keep Gail and it would be – Mark you're gone!

We're also competitive! Getting together in the holidays or going away together, we're driven by games, anything from orienteering to board games.

When we started having children, we agreed we'd look after each other's children if anything happened to us, we even put it in will. Our kids have grown up together and I love my nieces and nephews as my own, and I know the others feel the same way.

I could never have survived the traumas we have been through without my family; it brings you together and you forget about all the other bullshit.

Wendy and I are extra close, we go to the gym together, socialise together and at the moment work together. Even though I'm the baby I am very protective of both my siblings. I would do anything for my family, they are my world.

Although we grew up poor and had our challenges, I think we all turned out pretty good.

\*Maggie is wearing a woven top by Wiradjuri and Maori artist Ngaire Pakai.

As told to Jillian Mundy

SHARE YOUR FAMILY WITH OUR READERS

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

Koori Mail

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OUR CHILDREN



Loretta Thaiday, Katori O'Keefe and Shakwarsha Smith are growing their own food as part of the Paddock to the Plate program. Check out our next edition for the full story.

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# No notion of courtesy



A GROUP of right-wing senators who turned their backs during an Acknowledgement of Country inside the federal parliament have been sharply criticised.

The four One Nation politicians took the action in the Senate chamber when the statement of respect was read out as part of the traditional ceremonial opening of parliament on Tuesday, 22 July.

Cabinet minister Clare O'Neil lashed the Pauline Hanson-led party, saying it was disappointing their action became a point of focus, despite the shows of unity earlier in the day during Welcome to Country ceremonies.

"It was disrespectful and rude and childish," she told Seven on Wednesday.

The opening of parliament was a day to celebrate the strength of Australia's democracy and recommit to working for Australia's citizens, Ms O'Neil added.

Nationals senator Bridget McKenzie said while it was up to the government to determine the ceremonies for the opening of parliament, and that she had listened respectfully to the acknowledgement, others had different perspectives.

She also compared the One Nation silent protest to politicians who walk out of the chamber during the morning prayers and those who don't support the monarchy.

"The problem in a liberal democracy like ours is when we can't express different views," she told Media.

One Nation leader Pauline Hanson has claimed Acknowledgement of Country is "divisive" and "increasingly forced".

But Ms O'Neil said the party still should have treated all Australians with respect.

"Whatever your views about the



One Nation senators Tyron Whitten, Warwick Stacey, Malcolm Roberts and Pauline Hanson turn their back on the Acknowledgement to Country in the Senate chamber for the opening of the 48th Federal Parliament at Parliament House in Canberra, Tuesday, 22 July, 2025. (AAP)

Welcome to Country – we've got First Nations people who have been invited to come to parliament, to extend that hand of friendship and invite us and talk about 65,000 years of heritage that they bring to our beautiful, great country," she said.

"To treat people that way on the first day of parliament, I think, it was absolutely appalling."

Welcome to Country ceremonies and land acknowledgements have been at the centre of a right-wing culture war after a group of neo-Nazis booed a Welcome to

Country during an Anzac Day dawn service in Melbourne earlier in 2025.

Labor has backed Welcome to Country ceremonies, with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on Tuesday celebrating the tradition as a powerful way to begin the new parliament and reflect on Australia's history.

Mr Albanese also took a veiled swipe at the stance of former opposition leader Peter Dutton and some coalition MPs who branded Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country

proclamations as divisive and overdone.

"Like a lot of the more positive things about our nation, we shouldn't take it for granted," Mr Albanese said, adding the ceremony was not controversial.

Opposition Leader Sussan Ley said the ceremony "set the tone as we re-commit ourselves to the taking of practical action to improve lives and expand opportunity for Indigenous Australians in every part of our great country".

— AAP

## If you don't want to know, you can go

### Welcome to Country response

We share this message not out of obligation, but in the spirit of courtesy, respect, and unity that underpins our democratic values.

The Parliamentarians' Behaviour Code forms the Parliament's expectations for how we behave towards each other and others we engage with in the course of our work, while recognising the importance of a free exchange of ideas and parliamentary privilege, which is an integral part of our democracy.

All Australian parliamentarians have a shared responsibility as employers and leaders in the community to ensure that Commonwealth parliamentary workplaces meet the highest standards of integrity, dignity, safety and mutual respect.

In the 21st century, an ancient and meaningful ritual has found its place in the heart of Australian democracy. At the opening of the first sitting of Parliament, proceedings now begin with a Welcome to Country or an



Rhoda Roberts AO

Acknowledgment of Country. Gestures that honour the unbroken cultural and spiritual connection First Nations peoples have maintained with this land for over 65,000 years.

Some may see these acknowledgments as symbolic, but they are far more than that. They are not political statements – they are acts of recognition and respect. They signal a maturing nation, one that values truth, inclusion, and continuity. These ceremonies remind us that before the formation of modern Australia, there were and remain

the sovereign peoples with deep, enduring ties to Country.

Guided by the Parliamentarians' Behaviour Code, this practice also reflects the standards we expect from our elected representatives: integrity, respect, and a commitment to shared democratic values. In a time when leadership is often scrutinised, it is vital that those in power understand the intent behind such ritual not simply recite them but engage with their meaning.

On the 22nd of July 2025, we witnessed something deeply disappointing in the halls of our democracy. Members of Parliament who were elected to represent the diversity and values of our nation, some descendants of the first boat people turned their backs during an Acknowledgment of Country. It wasn't just a symbolic gesture of disrespect; it was a refusal to engage with the truth of our lands, and the oldest continuing culture in the world.

Let's be clear: if your instinct is to walk out, call it "divisive," or dismiss it as irrelevant, then perhaps you're not yet ready to fully appreciate the freedoms this country offers. Because freedom doesn't mean turning away from

things you don't agree with – it means being able to stand in respectful disagreement, listen with integrity, and grow through dialogue.

No one is forcing belief or ideology on you. It's not a demand for allegiance. It is simply recognition. It is respect. And as parliamentarians, that should be a minimum standard. If you're still learning, that's okay – many are. But if you're not willing to learn, and actively choose disengagement, then what exactly are you bringing to public life?

I question the motives of those who would protest a Welcome to Country, regardless of personal faith or lack thereof. That selective engagement reveals more about your own bias than the so-called "divisiveness" you decry.

Turning your back doesn't make you brave or principled. It shows an unwillingness to grow. And frankly, it fails the basic test of leadership: the ability to think beyond yourself and act for the whole country not just your corner of it.

If you're going to walk away from recognition, respect, and the truth of this land – then ask yourself honestly: what are you

walking towards?

It's unimaginable that the simple act of recognising the First Peoples of this land still ignites fear in the hearts of some of our politicians.

Exposing a mindset unwilling to learn, grow, or engage.

Let's be honest: if you don't want to know, you can go. This moment is simply not for you – not yet anyway. You may not be ready to stand in recognition of the legacy of this land's First Peoples. And that's your choice. But don't confuse your discomfort with courage. Don't mask fear as principle.

It's baffling that references to faith, tradition, or heritage from other communities are met with silence or polite acceptance, even when not personally shared. Yet when it comes to Indigenous recognition, we see walkouts and rejection. Why is that?

I question whether you're truly ready to represent a diverse, modern Australia.

Turning your back doesn't stop progress. It only shows that, for now, you're choosing to step out of truth and respect.

● Widjambul Wiyabal woman Rhoda Roberts is the Cultural Lead at the *Koori Mail*.



# Spreading the good news



A NEW masthead capturing stories from Aboriginal communities west of Alice Springs is proving popular with remote readers.

The first edition of *Ulparriatja Wilurratja Ara*, which translates to 'Stories from the south of the Western Desert area', rolled off the presses last month.

It is produced by Ngurratjuta Wanka Wilurratja/Alturla Rinya Aboriginal Corporation (NWWAR) and features stories from Papunya, Haasts Bluff, Mt Liebig, Kintore, Nyirripi and local outstations.

CEO Greg Drew said the newspaper was a tool to engage community residents about the important programs NWWAR delivered across the region and to promote good news stories which may have otherwise gone untold.

"Our board of directors pushed for the newspaper to share the work NWWAR's doing with the communities we work in. It's also about promoting a positive narrative and growing community pride.

"It's a community asset and free for community residents."

Mr Drew said he hoped four editions of *Ulparriatja Wilurratja Ara* would be printed each year and encouraged other local organisations to share their success stories.

"It's a great way to keep



NWWAR employees Adrian Jurrah, Garrard Anderson and Gerard Pepperill run an eye over the first edition of *Ulparriatja Wilurratja Ara*.

community informed on what NWWAR is doing in areas like the Community Development Program, Justice Re-investment, Child and Family Centre and Junior rangers.

"But it's not just about recognising our work, we're also offering space for communities and other local organisations to celebrate their achievements in words and pictures."

Mr Drew said the highly-anticipated first edition featured local stories about education, health, justice and community development. Sports lovers are also catered for with several pages of local footy news.

The newspaper is edited by long-time Northern Territory journalist and photographer and proud Kija/Noongar man Guy McLean, who joined NWWAR in a media and communications role at the start of the year.

## Eyes and ears

He's assisted by community-based NWWAR staff, who provide eyes and ears on the ground, digging up story content and taking deadly photos.

"As a passionate storyteller, I'm excited to have the chance to start a newspaper from scratch and it's a unique opportunity to celebrate the

great things which are happening out here," Mr McLean said.

"I'm also enjoying working closely with my local Aboriginal colleagues who can use their knowledge of community to tap into the great stories.

"I'm encouraging the local community to get in touch if they have events or stories they'd like to see included in future issues. It's the community's newspaper and, hopefully, something everyone can be proud of."

The next edition of *Ulparriatja Wilurratja Ara* will be available at local CDP offices and community stores in September.



## Koori Mail

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## Call for nominations

It's that time of year again...the National Indigenous Sports Foundation presents the 2025 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sports Awards. It's exciting times after a 20-year hiatus, they will return for the third year in a row and we need your help!

This year's sports awards will be held on Saturday, 15 November, at the Howard Smith Wharves in Meanjin (Brisbane) Qld. Tickets are now available on the National Indigenous Sports Foundation website.

The organising committee really wants to make these awards a national event that travels to a different location every year around this country.

Every year there are thirteen awards and they include: National Sports person, National Junior Sports person, National Sports person with a disability, National Senior Sports person, National Sports Team, National Community Sporting Organisation, National Sports Competition, National Volunteer, National Coach, National sports media.

Then the big awards, where we honour past efforts, of those who achieved at the highest level over a lifetime, with the National Lifetime Achievement Award. We can't go past celebrating those who made it possible for others to achieve, with the National Trailblazer Award.

So it's time for you to start thinking about who you will be nominating from one of the above award categories, you may know exactly who you want to nominate or you might need to do a little research. The nomination forms are available



### Shelley Ware

online at the National Indigenous Sports Foundation website.

Get those nominations in and they will be passed on for consideration to the expert judging panel of Olympian Patrick Johnson, AFL legend Nathan Lovett-Murray, NRL stars Bo de la Cruz and Dean Widders, executive manager Jaki Adams-Barton, Olympian Kyle Vander-Kuyp, sports writer Darren Moncrieff and myself. We are all looking forward to your nominations, so get them into us ASAP with nominations closing on Tuesday, 7 October.

To make these awards possible the Confederation of Australian Sport, Australian Sports Museum, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and A.G Coombs are confirmed sponsors.

Indigenous Sports Network managing director Nathan Lovett-Murray, who is working tirelessly with the NISF to make these awards happen, is calling out to sponsors. "We are still seeking sponsors for the event; we have a number of corporations that have committed

and it would be great to have our national sporting bodies on board too."

How fantastic it would be to see our national sporting bodies stand by the incredible First Nations athletes and people involved in sports as they are being lifted and celebrated by their own people.

We are also asking people to reach out within their own networks and have a conversation about potentially being a sponsor, who knows what's possible when our communities come together.

Previous winners of the awards in the last two years have been Catherine Freeman OAM, Patrick Mills, Lionel Rose, Amanda Reid, Telaya Blacksmith, Ronald Griffiths, Jake Duke, Torres Strait Youth and Recreation Sporting Association and so many more.

Some special announcements for the Awards night itself... NRL stars Dean Widders and Bo de la Cruz as our MCs. We will hear stories from our special guest speaker, rugby legend Matt Bowen, and music performances by 3% and local Jaymon Bob. It's going to be a huge night of celebration, yarns and blak excellence and we hope to see you there!

The organising committee is still seeking sponsors for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sports Awards and if you would like to sponsor, please email nathan@indigenoussports.com.au.

● Shelley Ware is a proud Yankunytatjara and Wirangu woman from Adelaide.



# Landmark climate case dismissed



Uncle Paul Kabai addresses the crowd after the decision at the Federal Court of Australia in Cairns, Queensland, Tuesday, 15 July, 2025. (AAP)



THE men behind a landmark climate case say they will continue their fight to save their homelands.

On Tuesday, a court rejected a case led by Uncle Pabai Pabai and Uncle Paul Kabai that argued the Commonwealth owes a duty of care to protect their homes from the impacts of climate change.

The uncles filed the landmark case against the government in the Federal Court in 2021, claiming it failed to protect their homelands in the Torres Strait from the impacts of climate change.

They sought orders from the court that would require the government to take steps to prevent harm to their communities, including cutting greenhouse gas emissions in line with the best available science.

The court heard evidence communities on Boigu and Saibai could have less than 30 years left before the low-lying islands between northern Queensland and Papua New Guinea become uninhabitable.

"I'm feeling very emotional," Uncle Pabai Pabai said after the decision.

"I wasn't thinking we'd lose this case ... I'm very heartbroken."

Mr Pabai said his main focus during the case had been his two-year-old son, and that was who he

## Ruling exposes gap in duty of care



AUSTRALIAN law needs to adapt, experts say after a court ruled the Commonwealth owes no duty of care to citizens on the front line of climate change.

Justice Wigney ruled negligence law does not allow compensation when it comes to government policy decisions, despite accepting many of the key factual elements of the Uncles' case including the impact of climate change on their islands.

Judi Storer, a casual academic at Flinders University's college of business, government and law, said it was time for the law to change.

"This is a real gap in our law because it basically says our government can make terrible policy that hurts people, that harms people and the government doesn't actually owe any duty of care to those people," Ms Storer said.

"As citizens of Australia we have no recourse against our government for making decisions that turn out to be negligent."

would keep fighting for.

"For the love of my son and for all the people in our community in the Torres Strait, for the bushfire and flood survivors, the farmers, kids and grandkids" he said.

"I'll keep fighting and will sit down with my lawyers and look at how we can appeal."

In handing down his decision, Federal Court Justice Michael Wigney accepted many of the key factual elements of the case,

including the impacts of climate change on the islands.

"Unless something is done to address global warming and the resulting escalating impacts of climate change, there is a very real risk that the applicants' worst fears will be realised, and they will lose their islands, their culture and their way of life, and will become, as it were, climate refugees," he said.

Justice Wigney also found the

In handing down his decision, Justice Wigney said he did not consider it open to him to rule otherwise, nor to recognise loss of culture as compensable in law for the first time.

The Uncles have not ruled out appealing but Mr Kabai said they will take their next move "step by step".

"When we take the next step, the government will have to listen to not only us in the Torres Strait but people all around Australia," he said.

The court has left open the possibility to revisit whether a duty of care is owed by the government, University of NSW Institute for Climate Risk and Resilience researcher Riona Moodley said.

Courts in countries such as the Netherlands and Switzerland have recognised similar duties and Australian law will need to adapt, she said.

Ms Storer can only envisage change on this polarising issue coming through the courts, because "I just cannot see how parliament will legislate to make themselves more accountable".

Commonwealth had "paid scant, if any, regard to the best available science" when setting emissions targets between 2015 to 2021.

The case failed because negligence law does not allow compensation when it comes to government policy decisions, he said.

Following the decision, Climate Change Minister Chris Bowen and Indigenous Australians Minister Malarndirri McCarthy said the

government understood the Torres Strait Islands were vulnerable to climate change and were already feeling its impacts.

"Where the former government failed on climate change, the Albanese government is delivering – because it's in the interest of all Australians," they said in a joint statement.

Shocked at the outcome, Uncle Paul Kabai said he'd like to ask the prime minister what to tell his family when he returned to Saibai Island.

"Mr Albanese and his expensive government lawyers will stand up and walk away just like they walk out the door of this court today," he said.

"They go home and sleep soundly in their expensive beds. We go back to our islands and the deepest pain imaginable."

"I want to ask Mr Albanese what I should say when I go home to my family? How do I tell them we have less than 30 years left?"

Mr Kabai said he and Mr Pabai would take things "one step at a time" but were confident they would eventually win the battle.

"The government is not listening to us," he said.

"They know (climate change) is happening and they keep approving mining, keep pushing mining."

"I want them to listen to our voices, not only ours but people around Australia and around the world."

– AAP

## Teen's killer appeals verdicts and sentence



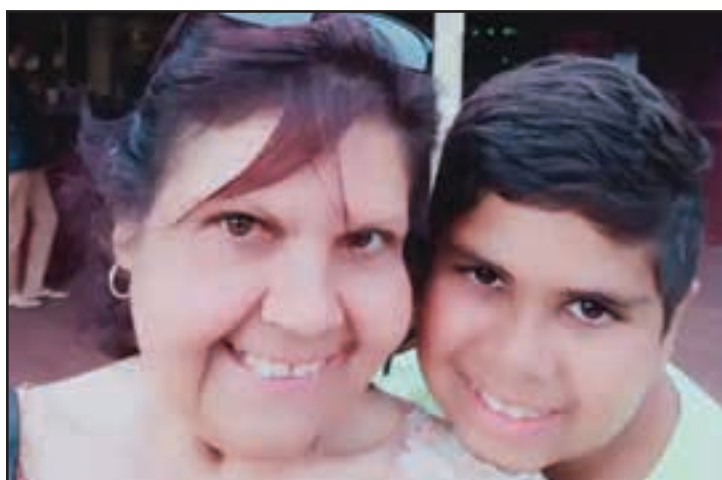
ONE of the men found guilty of killing an Indigenous teenager, who was chased into bushland and

violently bashed, is appealing his convictions and sentence.

Cassius Turvey, a Noongar Yamatji boy, died in hospital 10 days after he was deliberately struck to the head with a metal pole in Perth's eastern suburbs on October 13, 2022.

Jack Steven James Brearley, 24, and Brodie Lee Palmer, 30, were sentenced to life behind bars for murdering the 15-year-old after a 12-week trial in the West Australian Supreme Court.

Mitchell Colin Forth, 27, who was also accused of Cassius's murder, was found guilty of manslaughter and



Cassius Turvey with his mum, Mechelle Turvey. (Supplied)

sentenced to a total 12 years' imprisonment, eligible for parole after serving 10 years.

He has since lodged legal challenges against his convictions and manslaughter sentence imposed by Chief

Justice Peter Quinlan.

The guilty verdicts were unreasonable and unsupported, and the nine-year sentence for manslaughter was excessive given the circumstances,

court documents said.

Forth, who was convicted of six offences, was also given cumulative terms of one year and two years for two counts of deprivation of liberty committed on October 9 against two other youths.

Forth will be eligible for parole in January 2033 after his sentence was backdated to January 2023.

His other convictions for two counts of assault and stealing are for offences committed on October 9 and 13, for which he was handed concurrent sentences totalling five years and two months.

Brearley delivered the fatal blows on Cassius while "hunting for kids" because somebody had smashed his car windows.

He chased Cassius into bushland and knocked the teen to the ground and hit him

in the head with a metal pole, causing bleeding in his brain that led to his death.

When delivering the sentences for the three men in June, Justice Quinlan said the trio had cut Cassius's life short in a horrendous and vengeful act of aggression, violence and brutality.

He said Forth was never the main offender in the shameful course of events but always there in the background.

"You were just following along in the excitement of trying to be a tough guy," the judge said.

"And you followed Mr Brearley all the way to a conviction for manslaughter."

Brearley will be eligible for parole after serving 22 years and Palmer after serving 18 years.

– AAP



# Decades-long fight leads to historic rights recognition



AN historic native title determination has seen exclusive native-title rights granted to three Traditional Owner groups in north-west Victoria. This determination will recognise exclusive native-title rights.

This native-title determination is also the first in Victoria in more than two years and the first of its kind along the Murray River in Victoria.

This determination was officially lodged in 2015 and recognises the First Peoples of the Millewa-Mallee, which includes the Latji Latji, Ngintait and Nyeri Nyeri peoples as the native-title holders.

The decision includes areas with exclusive rights for Traditional Owners, meaning access to those areas will require permission.

The determination area includes Mildura, follows the Murray River, stretches south along the Calder Highway, and extends west through the Murray-Sunset National Park to the South Australian border.

For the first time in Victoria, this determination recognises exclusive native-title rights over parts of the determination area where extinguishment is disregarded because the land is held or reserved specifically for First Nations peoples.

This is the strongest form of native title, recognising the First Peoples' right to control access to Country under traditional law and custom.

However, farms, roads, public spaces and camp grounds, waterways used for recreational fishing and boating, and other locations with existing titles, will not be impacted.

Shane Jones Snr, Latji Latji man and member of the applicant for the First Peoples of the Millewa-Mallee, said that this was a momentous day and that he was incredibly proud of the result.

"As a Latji Latji man, I am proud that our rights and interests are formally recognised on the lands where my ancestors lived," Jones said.

"Alongside all First Peoples of the Millewa-Mallee, including the



Members of the Traditional Owner groups that have been granted exclusive native title to their lands.



Latji Latji man Shane Jones Snr, Nyeri Nyeri Elder Wendy Brabham and Ngintait man Timothy Johnson.

Ngintait and Nyeri Nyeri peoples, we continue to live our culture, and with native title, our present and future generations can continue the legacy of all our Elders and emerging Elders."

Wendy Brabham, a Nyeri Nyeri Elder welcomed the determination.

"I hear the voices of our Nyeri Nyeri ancestors, I hear the voices of our present generations,"

Brabham said.

"My mother's demands for land rights in the 1970s and, for more than 25 years, our claims for Native Title suffered, until now, an onslaught of rejections."

Brabham said Nyeri Nyeri peoples, with their own ancient, longstanding laws, customs and protocols have had to listen to, and "bend to Australian laws, customs and protocols in a

constant battle – a clash of World Views."

"I hope our future generations of all our family groups will build on today's decision to honour our ancestors by strengthening, preserving and sharing our culture," Brabham said.

Timothy Johnson, Ngintait man and member of the applicant for the First Peoples of the Millewa-Mallee, said it was a defining

moment for the Latji Latji, Ngintait and Nyeri Nyeri peoples who have been on this journey for decades.

"This native-title determination is a defining moment, and it means we can continue to care and look after the lands where our ancestors walked, hunted and held ceremonies on, while working in partnership to establish jobs for all our members and community," said Mr Johnson.

"We will all benefit from this native-title determination and we are looking forward to working as one to keep our culture and history ongoing."

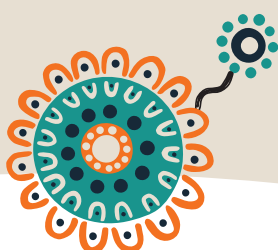
In her judgement, Justice Elizabeth Bennett said that "despite the dispossession and other atrocities inflicted upon the Native Title Holders and their predecessors, the Native Title Holders have maintained their traditional laws and customs and have under them a deep and enduring connection" to the area.

The decision follows a 10-year legal battle and covers thousands of square kilometres in the northwest corner of the state stretching to the South Australian border.

It takes in an area that includes Mildura, follows the Murray River and stretches south along the Calder Highway.

## Youpla Support Program

### Free financial counselling in Palm Island and Charters Towers



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As part of the Australian Government's Youpla Support Program, eligible former Youpla members can access free financial counselling from Mob Strong Debt Help.

**Mob Strong will be visiting Palm Island and Charters Towers in August to provide financial counselling to former Youpla members.**

You can find out more on the Mob Strong Facebook page.



Australian Government

**Youpla Support Program**

0672NS\_5646



An area of Country covered by the determination.





Members of four Northern Territory land councils in front of the NT Parliament, in Darwin, Thursday, July 24, 2025. (AAP)

# Land councils accuse NT government of overt racism



ABORIGINAL land councils have taken aim at the Northern Territory government, accusing it of overt racism and promoting policies that harm Indigenous people.

They say it has failed to work with them to reduce crime and boost economic development.

But NT Aboriginal Affairs Minister Steve Edgington has refuted the claims, saying the government was working towards empowering Indigenous communities.

After a two-day meeting in Darwin, the four NT land councils have urged the Country Liberal Party government to stop ignoring them and come to the table to address key issues.

They include growing Indigenous incarceration rates and improved economic opportunities to benefit



Central Land Council deputy chair Barbara Shaw in front of the NT Parliament.

Aboriginal communities.

Northern Land Council chair Matthew Ryan told reporters outside the NT parliament on Thursday there was overt racism

in government policies.

"Let me be very honest – there is, no buts about it," he said.

"Unfortunately, it's still happening. We want to eliminate that, we want a genuine partnership ... at the moment there's none."

He said Aboriginal people wanted to be part of the territory's economic development but it was "appalling" government ministers were failing to work with or listen to the land councils to promote that.

Since coming to power on an anti-crime platform in 2024, the government has toughened bail laws and provided hundreds of new prison beds as more Aboriginal youths are locked up.

It has also lowered the age of criminal responsibility from 12 to 10 years.

Mr Ryan said the law and order funding would be better

spent on providing programs to keep Aboriginal youths out of jail.

He said the land councils were also united in wanting to work with the NT police commissioner to address racism within the force.

Central Land Council deputy chair Barbara Shaw said racism against Aboriginal people began when the ships arrived in 1788 "but we're still standing here today".

"If the government would only listen to us and work with us in genuine partnership in tackling crime in the Northern Territory, we wouldn't be stacking and racking in our prisons," she said.

Ms Shaw said the government should listen to the Elders to take children back onto Country to be with family and keep them out of jail.

Mr Edgington said the government was working with the four land councils and other

Indigenous bodies on Closing the Gap initiatives.

"We are also working in partnership with Aboriginal people to empower communities that want a greater say," he said.

Mr Edgington said the NT and federal governments were making major investments in remote communities including building new homes and boosting health and other critical services.

However, an Aboriginal justice agency has called for federal funding for remote policing and other justice operations to be suspended until the NT government changes its hardline approach to crime.

North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency acting CEO Anthony Beven said the Commonwealth should put conditions on the table to say "we shouldn't be locking young kids up".

– AAP

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# Keeping the fires burning



FIRST Nations leaders in the Central West region have conducted a cultural burn on Wiradjuri

Country to help regenerate a critically endangered ecological community on a significant site near Orange.

Three Rivers Cultural Services conducted the burn at a vegetated, non-operational section of Transgrid's Molong substation site in collaboration with the Canobolas Rural Fire Service Brigade.

The First Nations fire practice aims to contribute to the maintenance and restoration of 25ha of Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands, a critically endangered ecological community, and habitat for native flora and fauna.

Transgrid general manager of property, approvals and logistics Suzanne Westgate said the cultural burn on the Molong substation site involved burning the land in patches, producing low flames, which moved slowly and produced white smoke, to improve the health of Country.

Members of Three Rivers Cultural Services conducted the cultural burn following training from national Indigenous network



**Three Rivers Cultural Services' Jordan Moore and Wiradjuri knowledge holder Brian Ah-see during a smoking ceremony.**

Firesticks," she said.

"We are proud to support them in reinvigorating cultural burning practices that have been used by Indigenous peoples for thousands of years to look after their sacred landscape."

Three Rivers Cultural Services managing director Jordon Moore said this burn is more than fire on the ground — it's a cultural and ecological responsibility.

"We're guided by our

ancestors, Elders, and Country itself," Moore said.

"Cultural fire brings people together, teaches Yindyamarra (respect), and helps us heal the land the right way."

Transgrid provided a grant to Three Rivers Aboriginal Corporation under its community partnerships program last year to purchase cultural-burn equipment and artefacts.

The land at Molong substation



**The Molong site cultural burn.**

has been identified by Transgrid as a potential site for a Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement to perpetually preserve valuable native flora and fauna including threatened species.

It could also provide Indigenous cultural and employment opportunities focusing on bush foods, bush medicines and cultural revitalisation for young Wiradjuri men.

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# Exhibition of cultural creation and design spans generations

By JILLIAN MUNDY



*Greeno – Generations of Cultural Creation and Design* opens in Nipaluna/Hobart this Friday.

The exhibition features shell necklaces, model reed and bark canoes unique to Lutruwita/Tasmania, and photographs and drawings with accompanying stories by celebrated Pakana Elders and artists, husband and wife Aunty Lola and Uncle Rex Greeno, both their (late) mothers – Valerie Burgess-MacSween and Dulcie Greeno, their children – Vanessa and Dean, and three of their grandchildren – Harrison, Charlyse and Sheryden.

Created over years, the works represent a passing of knowledge over many more than those four generations, knowledge of tides, of seasons, of cycles, ingenuity and history.

"Why I make art is not just about art, but a significant cultural practice passed down through many generations of my family, from my great-grandmother to me, and now to my granddaughters and extended family of nieces," Aunty Lola said.

"My thoughts are that I learnt about collecting shells, getting to know where and when to collect shells. What are the traditional shells, and how are they collected at spring tide when the weather is suitable for collecting.

"We're island people, we are sea related.

"And it's a great pleasure that we're able to come together and have this exhibition as a family."

Aunty Lola was born on Cape Barren Island in 1946, Uncle Rex on Flinders Island in 1942.

Over her lifetime Lola shared knowledge of treasured Pakana shell stringing, not just with her own family but other Pakana women where the tradition had not continued in their own.

She fondly recalls teaching granddaughter Sheryden to string a shell bracelet when she was about five.

"We sat down in Dean's garage when he lived in Victoria, showed her how to make a shell bracelet, she had just eaten lunch and had a dirty t-shirt, but she still sat there and made this shell bracelet."

What shell stringing is to Aunty Lola, in many ways canoe building is to Uncle Rex.

They have both published books, exhibited, are passionate and generous about passing on

knowledge and always up for a yarn about their culture and history.

A retired fisherman, Uncle Rex became a prolific canoe builder and artist over the past few decades. He has been at the forefront of reviving the canoe building and through his writing and drawing has documented history and ways of life from pre-invasion to the mid 1990s, much of it passed onto him by his grandfather and uncles and many from his own memory.

As the exhibition was being pulled together Uncle Rex was admitted to hospital and is physically unable to continue drawing or complete the over-five-metre canoe destined for the exhibition. His son Dean and grandson Harrison, who both have model canoes in the exhibition, will complete it under his guidance in the new year.

"The master shipwright has his eye on the project, there is a big handover of knowledge going on at the moment," Dean said.

"He still has hand on the tiller, don't you worry, his mind is sharp as a tack."

Dean said canoe building had always been an intergeneration thing.

"Dad loves teaching people – whether it's fishing, carpentry or canoe building."

Much like his parents, Dean's varied careers have contributed to his art – everything from fishing with his father to aircraft maintenance engineer to home education officer, sculptor and researching how climate change is affecting Pakana resources.

Last year Dean won the People's Choice Award at the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards with tunapri milaythina muka – *To Know Sea Country* through making, a part-model traditional bark canoe part-plywood model of a whaler boat built on Cape Barren Island from a ship wreck – an ode to the seafaring history, resilience and strength of his people.

He sees his career as a nod to tradition while moving into the new age.

Dean has a small model bronze canoe in *Greeno*.

*Greeno – Generations of Cultural Creation and Design* is in Bett Gallery, Level 1/65 Murray St, Nipaluna/Hobart from 1 to 23 August.

Bett Gallery is a, if not the, premier high-end commercial gallery that exhibits Aboriginal works in Lutruwita regularly. A family business passed through generations, it runs more like a social enterprise, money making is not what drives them.

Gallery co-director Emma Bett describes *Greeno* as epic.



Aunty Lola Greeno passing on knowledge, surrounded by granddaughters and nieces – Charlyse Greeno, Michelle Compagne, Rhiannon Sainty, Nikki Sainty, Glenda Lee, Paige Geappen and Sheryden Greeno at a workshop in Launceston, 2020. Photograph – Jillian Mundy.



Shell stringing through generations will be on exhibit. Photograph – Alistair Bett.



Charlyse Greeno beside her aunt Vanessa Greeno and grandmother Lola Greeno. Photograph – Alistair Bett.



Uncle Rex Greeno pictured in 2020 with one of his canoes. Photograph – Jillian Mundy.



Vanessa, Dean, Rex and Aunty Lola Greeno on Lola's 70th in 2016. Photograph – Jillian Mundy.

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# Lutruwita communities

By JILLIAN MUNDY



ABORIGINAL community from across Lutruwita/Tasmania frocked up and suited up for the first ever NAIDOC Ball and Awards night in Limilnaturi/Devonport.

Due to be held in Pataway/Burnie this year, the event instead was held half an hour down the road in Limilnaturi/Devonport, where the venue and large turn out did not disappoint.

As well as the awards there was a DJ, fine food, lucky door prizes and of course a dance floor.

A NAIDOC Lifetime Achievement Award went to Uncle Jim Everett-puralia meenamatta, recognising his lifetime of dedication, cultural leadership, steadfast commitment to community, resilience, compassion and true spirit of caring for Country and Mob. The award honoured his exceptional contributions and ongoing legacy.

The *Koori Mail's* Jillian Mundy was awarded the NAIDOC Aborigine of the Year Award for her dedication to storytelling, truth-telling and cultural preservation as a photographer, writer, film maker and artist – amplifying First Nations voices and challenging colonial narratives. She was thanked for her unwavering commitment to capturing the Aboriginal community in Lutruwita and the deep trust the community has in her to tell stories with respect and care.

There were also three NAIDOC special achievement awards.

One went to Family Support Worker Keeomee Mansell, for her tireless dedication – showing up every day for her community on the North West Coast of Lutruwita where she is considered a pillar of strength, uplifting those around her with resilience, warmth and cultural integrity.

Another went to Jazmin Wheatley, celebrating her outstanding leadership, deep cultural knowledge and strong advocacy for her community. The proud young Palawa women is described as embodying 2025's NAIDOC theme – 'The Next Generation – Strength, Vision and Legacy'.

The other went to founder and principal solicitor of Marrawah Law, Leah Cameron Brown, for her outstanding contributions to law, justice and creating stronger futures for Aboriginal people, including uplifting her community through mentorship and advocacy, and an unwavering commitment to truth-telling and self-determination.

Lutruwita's NAIDOC ball hosted by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre rotates from Nipaluna/Hobart to Pataway/Burnie to Launceston each year. Next year is Launceston's turn.



Jazmin Wheatley is presented a NAIDOC Special Achievement Award by Tony Medcraft.



Sara Maynard accepts her colleague and friend Leah Brown's NAIDOC Special Achievement Award on her behalf.



Jasmine Smart presents NAIDOC Aborigine of the Year Award to Jillian Mundy.



Sisters Lynne and Di Spotswood from Launceston with Karen Smart from Burnie.



MC for the night, Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre chairperson Graeme Gardner.



June and Lionel Burgess from East Devonport always look forward to a NAIDOC Ball.



Djirubal man Ben Wallace with wife Emily Wallace who won a deadly gift box in the lucky door prize, and his sister Kaila Wallace.



Brenda Hodge and Marilyn Snooks.



# celebrate 2025 in style



Terry Maynard, Beryl Green, Gary Haines, Tamara Summers, Grahame Stonehouse, Delia Summers, Cody Summers and Dougie Mansell.



Jesse Cruse, Connor Wright, Jada Edwards, Nathan Edwards, Jodie Edwards, NAIDOC Special Achievement Award Winner Keeomee Mansell and Shari Longhey.



Matron of the Ball Sandra Collins, Belle of the Ball Carlinda Lynch, Beau of the Ball Thomas Riley and Old Coe of the Ball Dougie Mansell.



Kathleen Brown and daughter Taylor Wigg.



Leo Lynch from Launceston – it's not a Black Fella party until the spoons come out!



Dylan Aram, Emma Morse, Copper Jones and Ella Haberle from Latrobe.



Norton Brown, Jenna Wadley/Maynard and Brody Brown.



Ruby Middleton, Zack Riley, Thomas Riley, Melissa Hayes, Shaynah Dolbel and Montanta Barendregt at the back and twins Mia and Amber Binns Riley at the front.



Pat Prehn from Burnie.



Christine Hampton, with sisters – birthday gal Audery Beeton and Toni Stephens, from Launceston.



# We have a strong future

By JILLIAN MUNDY



IN and around the continent's most southern city NAIDOC week was celebrated with everyone's favourite events.

The week kicked off with hundreds turning out to the flag raising at Piyura Kitina/Risdon Cove just over the river from Nipaluna/Hobart.

Piyura Kitina was returned to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community in 1995. It is the site where dozens of Aboriginal people were massacred on 3 May 1804 at the hands of British soldiers, convicts and colonists.

The flag raising, attended by the Aboriginal community, allies, students, politicians and the wider community was with little doubt the biggest NAIDOC week gathering each year. It has been getting so big that this year a private bus company donated a bus and driver to transport people to avoid traffic jams and parking problems in the large car park.

The flag raising is a chance to reflect as the week of celebrations kicks off.

Nala Mansell, campaign manager of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, the organisation which oversees the care and rehabilitation of Piyura Kitina, delivered the NAIDOC speech.

She said the 2025 theme spoke to what Palawa already know in their hearts.

"Our future is strong because our people are strong.

"We don't just gather to reflect on a theme, we gather to honour the past, to celebrate our survival and to demand the future that our people deserve," she said.

"We are here because generations of Aboriginal people stood tall when they were told to disappear, because they spoke language in secret, they protected our Country in silence and resisted policies that were designed to wipe us out. They made sure our culture, our knowledge and our identity didn't just survive, but thrived. We are still here because they refused to give up, and now we honour them, not with silence, but with song, smoke, with action and with the truth."

Ms Mansell spoke of land returns, repatriations of ancestors remains, reclaimed language and children's, health and ranger

programs.

She said Country is still being destroyed, coastal areas are being sold off and heritage being damaged, erased and disrespected on a daily basis.

"The truth is, governments are still putting profit before our people and our culture, our young people are still being targeted by police, still over-represented in prisons, still treated like problems instead of possibilities."

She said the Aboriginal community is sick and tired of waiting for treaty, land returns and justice.

"We're not asking for special treatment, we are demanding what is rightfully ours, the return of our stolen lands, the protection of our ancient, irreplaceable heritage, and the right to Aboriginal self-determination, the current push for a truth-telling process in Tasmania means absolutely nothing without action behind it, a truth commission doesn't return land, doesn't offer justice and doesn't shift power," she said.

"Our truth says that this land is ours, and it always has been."

Since NAIDOC week there has been the early state election. As the *Koori Mail* went to press, while votes were still being counted, it was apparent the Greens and independents holding the balance of power and who would form government was still being negotiated. The Liberal government had announced a Truth Commission and the abandoning of Treaty in May, leading up to the election and after neither major party has publicly mentioned Aboriginal affairs.

The day after the flag raising, competitors in Karadi's Amazing Race stopped at Piyura Kitina – one of their seven pitstops. Inspired by the TV show, it is in fact not a race, teams in cars and minibuses gather clues and call into pitstops to complete activities before gathering for a barbeque where winners are the luck of the draw. It is another NAIDOC event that keeps growing, in its fifth it attracted around 200 'competitors'.

Other events in and around Nipaluna included the highly contested NAIDOC quiz night, a gourmet bush tucker lunch, children's NAIDOC disco, a display in the state library, film screenings and the launch of the Nakura strategy.



Pakana Ranger Tooarn Brown gets a smoking ceremony going at the Piyura Kitina flag raising.



Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre campaign manager Nala Mansell.



Tasmanian Aboriginal Elders Rosie Smith and Edwina Shaw raising the flag at Piyura Kitina.



Hundreds trekked up the hill for the Piyura Kitina flag raising, it is part of the tradition, unlike most years it was not so cold.



Andrew Solomon, Diona Rodgers, Thomas Riley and Teangi Brown.





April Scotney-Hill, Xavier Scotney-Barron and Sienna Scotney-Barron with their father Peter Scotney (2nd from left).



Three generations – Tait Clark, Ayla Williams, Molly Palmer, Grace Williams, Nichola Overeem, Arthur Finch and Alison Overeem.



A small section of the crowd at the Piyura Kitina flag raising, which is amongst the biggest, if not the biggest, NAIDOC gathering each year in Lutruwita.



Team 'Zoomies', united with their ADHD superpowers for the Amazing Race – Nevaeh Downham, Kellyanne Williams, Bryce Davis and Alicia William.



Palawa woman Wendy Moore who led the research and development of Nukara – the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre's strategy for the transfer of responsibility for keeping Aboriginal children safe, which was launched during NAIDOC week.



University of Tasmania staff and students, and Aboriginal community at the NAIDOC morning tea hosted by the uni's Riawunna Centre for Education Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.



UTAS Riawunna NAIDOC morning tea speakers who talked about the NAIDOC theme, origins of NAIDOC and their own journeys – lecturer Jodi Haines, gender studies student Anna Wommatakimmi from Tiwi Islands, Wiradjuri UTAS student teacher Trai Wells with skateboard decks he painted representing his home Country that he spoke about, and Aboriginal community engagement officer Janice Ross.



The Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre Families Program pulled two big teams together to take on Karadi's Amazing Race.



Nunami Sculthorpe-Green, on behalf of the elated Sculthorpes team, accepts the Nipaluna NAIDOC Quiz trophy from Colin J Hughes of You Coes team, whose four year winning streak was broken.



It was a family affair beside the BBQ – cooking and inhaling the smell of mutton birds is Haylee Langdon, John Dickson, Jamie Langdon and Maisen Langdon.



# Mob celebrate together in Bega

By MARION WILLIAMS



TRADITIONAL custodians Aunty Glenda Dixon and Aunty Ellen Mundy love NAIDOC events such as the one that Bega Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) held at Bega High School in July.

Djiriganj/Ngarigo woman Aunty Glenda said NAIDOC Week is very important. "It brings all the Mob together because we don't always get to see each other."

Djiriganj/Ngarigo woman Aunty Ellen said the event was like a modern-day gathering for people to come together. "It is a good time to yarn up and release stress," Aunty Ellen said.

Aunty Ellen said the next generation is learning from the Elders. "It is important they learn about their grassroots, their local history and their culture, and be proud Aboriginal people regardless of the tribal boundary we come from."

Some of the students who work at Bega LALC's youth café were doing paid work experience surveying people about community services.

CEO Leanne Atkinson said the services gap analysis was funded by the premier's department.

"There are many services out there, but the community isn't receiving what it needs," she said. "How can we as an organisation help at the local level so they can get what they need, when they need it, in a form that works for them?"



The Bega River Dancers performing. Photo: David Gallon.



Dianne Gerrard, Aunty Glenda Dixon and Aunty Ellen Mundy. Photo: Marion Williams.



The Bega River Dancers led by Bronwyn Luff. Photo: David Gallon.

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# Celebrations on GunaiKurnai Country



THE GunaiKurnai community of East Gippsland in Victoria, turned up in large numbers for NAIDOC Week celebrations earlier this month.

Hosted by the Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative (GEGAC), the traditional community march attracted one of the biggest crowds in recent memory, with more than 450 community members and allies marching down the main street of Bairnsdale under bright, sunny skies.

For GEGAC, the march is the centrepiece of NAIDOC Week celebrations each year, which also includes a Welcome Baby to

Country ceremony on the Monday, where Aboriginal babies born in the past year are welcomed by local Elders, who offer them cultural gifts, including a possum skin and clapsticks.

In his address to community to kick off NAIDOC Week celebrations on the Monday, GEGAC CEO Kenton Winsley spoke of the connection between the 2025 NAIDOC Week theme – “The Next Generation: Strength, Vision & Legacy” – and GEGAC’s strong focus on investing in more opportunities and support for young Aboriginal people.

“This theme is more than words,” Winsley said. “It’s a theme that reminds us that our future rests in the hands of our young people – and that the strength of

our communities depends on how well we support them to lead, to grow and to succeed.”

“That’s why GEGAC is actively expanding our services and programs to invest in young people.”

Those new investments include a program of gatherings and excursions for young Aboriginal men, GunaiKurnai language lessons at its Dala Yooro Kindergarten, Aboriginal dance workshops for boys and girls, didgeridoo workshops for young men, basketweaving and cultural arts teachings, and the continued expansion of GEGAC’s Academy Traineeship program.

Winsley also spoke to the large gathering about GEGAC’s plans for a dedicated youth service,

which will offer a culturally-safe space for young Aboriginal people to access support for their health and wellbeing.

“It will reflect what our young mob have told us they need,” Winsley said. “Not just clinical care but a place they feel seen, heard and valued – a place of healing, connection and strength.”

Following Kenton’s address at the NAIDOC Week flag-raising, 22 local families took part in the Welcome Baby to Country ceremony, introducing their new Boorai to GunaiKurnai Elders Aunty Helen Morgan, Uncle Harry Stewart, Uncle Andrew Morgan, Aunty May Pearce and Aunty Lena Morris.

Uncle Harry was recently inducted into the Victorian

Aboriginal Honour Roll.

As community gathered ahead of the NAIDOC March, GEGAC’s Deputy CEO Joshua Tuiono, who is the grandson of prominent GEGAC founders Marion and Robert “Jumbo” Pearce, had another rousing message for the next generations.

“To our young people, I want to say this: you belong,” Tuiono said.

“Your culture is your strength. Your voice matters. You are the living continuation of over 60,000 years of resilience, strength, and knowledge. Whether you’re in a boardroom, a classroom, or out on Country, walk with your head held high. You carry the hopes of those who came before you and the responsibility to shape what comes next.”



GunaiKurnai Elder Aunty Helen Morgan at the Welcome Baby to Country ceremony.



Aunty May Pearce at the Welcome Baby to Country ceremony.



Azarijah-linira Tuiono and Marion Wilson carry the Aboriginal Flag in the NAIDOC March.



Jason Hood and Yindi-Myee took part in the Welcome Baby to Country ceremony.



Joseph Harrison was part of the group of young people performing Aboriginal cultural dance during NAIDOC Week.



(L to R) GunaiKurnai Elders Aunty Lena Morris, Uncle Andrew Morgan, Aunty May Pearce, Uncle Harry Stewart and Aunty Helen Morgan (sitting).



Nala Solomon (on shoulders) and Mahkylah Farnham in the NAIDOC March down the main street of Bairnsdale.





Traditional Owners at a celebration for the declaration of the Masigilgal Indigenous Protected Area. The area covers 11 uninhabited coral cays and islands. (Picture: supplied)

# IPA protects species

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THE dedication of the Masigilgal Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) has recently been celebrated with a ceremony on Masig

Island in the Torres Strait – locking in traditional land and sea management practices and local jobs.

The new IPA is located within the Kulkalgal nation of the central Torres Strait region, Queensland, and covers 245 hectares of land across 11 uninhabited coral cays and islands.

The islands within the IPA and the connected reef ecosystems are home to threatened species, including six species of turtle, dugong and over 30 migratory bird species such as the critically endangered Eastern Curlew.

Surrounding reef, pristine waters and beaches – virtually free of feral animals – are a haven for diverse species of cultural and conservation significance.

Local waters support an abundance of marine life including kailar (crayfish), shellfish and beche-de-mer.

Since 2001, the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) has supported five IPA projects, including Masigilgal, to protect a total of 22 uninhabited islands and more than 360 hectares of Country held strong in Traditional Owner care across the Torres Strait.

TSRA through its ranger program will continue to work closely with Masigilgal Traditional Owners and the Masig community to manage the IPA.

Drawing on traditional and western knowledge, management activities will include biodiversity surveys and mapping, turtle and seagrass monitoring, managing threats including climate change, invasive plants, pest animals and preservation of Kulkalgal Ya language and Masigilgal culture.

Indigenous Protected Areas are established under voluntary agreements between First Nations people and the Australian Government to manage and protect areas of land and sea for biodiversity conservation.

They also deliver positive cultural, social and economic outcomes for Traditional Owners and First Nations people.

TSRA Chairperson George Nona said this IPA celebration is deeply meaningful not just to Masig – but for all of the Torres Strait.

"TSRA heard the community's call in 2017 and are proud to support this achievement led by the Masigilgal people for the benefit of their land and sea, current and future generations," Nona said.

"TSRA's Ranger program – including local Masigilgal Rangers – will help community manage its land and sea aspirations by connecting traditional knowledge and western science."

Minister for Indigenous Australians, Senator Malarndirri McCarthy, congratulated the Masigilgal Traditional Owners and community for the dedication of the unique Masigilgal IPA, adding to the Torres Strait Indigenous Protected Areas estate and Australia's National Reserve System.

"The dedication of the Masigilgal IPA will strengthen cultural authority and custodianship of these islands and reefs, and create employment and other social and economic benefits for community," Senator McCarthy said.

"The Albanese Labor Government is proud to back Traditional Owners and First Nations communities to manage land and sea Country through our Indigenous Protected Areas and Indigenous Rangers Programs, delivering positive outcomes for the environment as well as employment and economic development opportunities."



# Funding promised for roadmap



THE WA Government has promised funding to support action on the 2024 Yule River Call to Action and Solutions Roadmap.

WA Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Don Punch made the commitment at the 10th Annual on-Country Bush Meeting at Yule River, held over 23 and 24 July 2025.

Coordinated by Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC), more than 500 people attended the bush meeting to discuss local, community-led priorities to Close the Gap for First Nations people across the Pilbara.

Opening the meeting, YMAC Co-Chairperson Mrs Eaton said: "I stand here proudly to acknowledge the old people who met here at the Yule River Meeting Place decades ago to organise the 1946 Pilbara Strike. They fought for us. From Onslow to Marble Bar, from Roebourne, from the desert to Hedland – they stood as one. We're here to challenge the government. We're here as one voice."

In her speech, Mrs Eaton also acknowledged that past Yule River meetings have seen commitment from government with no action.

Day One saw First Nations attendees discuss and decide on several priority issues that they



**Yule River Call to Action Working Group members with Minister Don Punch and other key government agency staff at the On-Country Bush Meeting at Yule River.**

expect the government to address in the next 12 months. These priorities are aligned to the CTA and the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, and are across six key areas of concern: Systemic Reform, Education, Health, Housing, Wellbeing, and Community Safety, and decided on community presenters for Day Two.

Day Two saw ministers, commissioners and heads of government agencies join the

meeting, with community members Raylene Button and Henry Lockyer presenting the day-one priority items to government, before speeches from Minister Punch, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Katie Kiss and a Q&A panel for community to ask questions of government directly.

Attendees at Yule River have been calling for many years for the government to act on the place-

based solutions that have been developed by the community, and Minister Punch was clear that he will implement a place-based approach. Minister Punch also committed to attend a meeting with community members in the next six months to provide updates and reporting on what work is being undertaken to address and deliver on the CTA.

YMAC CEO Simon Hawkins acknowledges that the proposed

funding from Minister Punch is a refreshing outcome to resource the CTA in partnership with the community – which has been a longstanding invitation to government at previous bush meetings.

The 2024 CTA is an open invitation to local, state and federal governments and industry to work together with First Nations peoples from across the Pilbara to achieve real and sustainable change.

It contains practical strategies and place-based solutions, identified by community members for: Systemic Reform, Education, Health, Housing, Wellbeing, and Community Safety.

Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) coordinates the Yule River Bush Meeting under the direction of its Pilbara Regional Committee and in consultation with the Yule River Call to Action Working Group. In March this year, YMAC called on the state government to urgently address the concerns laid out in the Call to Action after the Productivity Commission released its data on Closing the Gap which highlighted ongoing failure to address the issues facing Aboriginal communities.

YMAC thanked the Town of Port Hedland and the Pilbara Development Commission for their sponsorship of this year's event.

## Greater Western Flank Phase 4 Drilling and Subsea Installation Environment Plan

Woodside has led the development of the LNG industry in Australia and today aims to thrive through the global energy transition.

Woodside consults with relevant persons to gather feedback to inform its Commonwealth Environment Plans.

### Greater Western Flank Phase 4 (GWF-4) Drilling and Subsea Installation Environment Plan (EP)

The Greater Western Flank Phase 4 (GWF-4) Project intends to partially fill ullage (unused production capacity) at the existing Goodwyn Alpha (GWA) facility. The GWF-4 Drilling and Subsea Installation EP comprises drilling offshore wells in nearfields and the Wilcox Field which will be tied back to existing GWF subsea infrastructure. Woodside plans to drill up to six wells. The EP will also cover installation and pre-commissioning of subsea infrastructure.

### Environment that may be affected (EMBA)

The EMBA is the largest geographic area where unplanned events could potentially have an environmental consequence. The whole EMBA will not be affected.

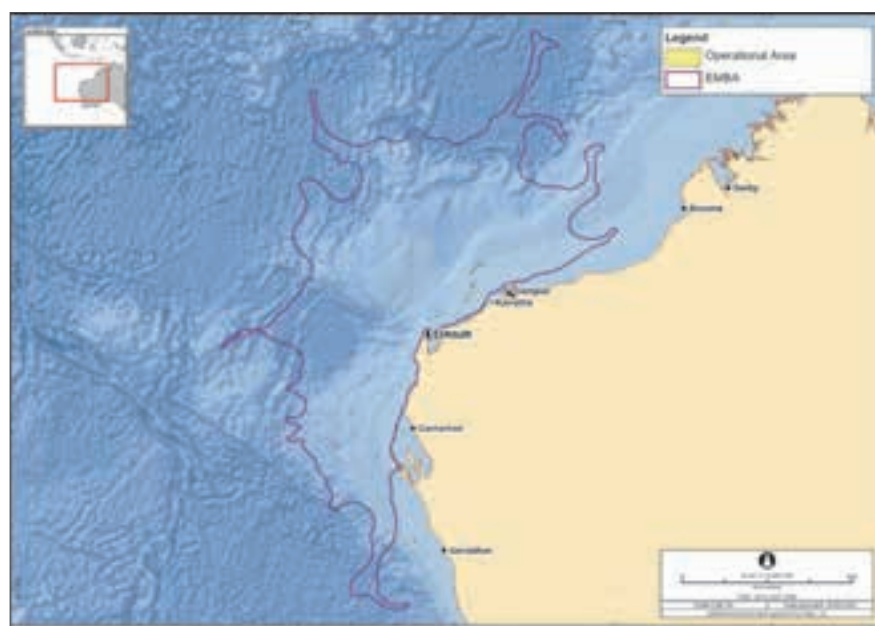
### We would like to hear from you

If you are an individual, organisation or community group and believe your functions, interests or activities may be impacted by the activities under this Environment Plan, we want to hear from you by **27 August 2025**.

### To find out more go to:

[www.woodside.com/what-we-do/consultation-activities](http://www.woodside.com/what-we-do/consultation-activities)

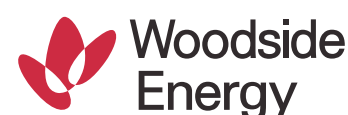
You can also subscribe via our website to receive future information on upcoming activities.



[consultation@feedback.woodside.com](mailto:consultation@feedback.woodside.com)

Toll free: 1800 442 977

[woodside.com](http://woodside.com)





# Striving for cultural access

By COLE BAXTER



RESPECT in culture and our elders underpins Nyoongar Woman Rickeeta Walley's ongoing work within community, which is reinforcing safe spaces for our next generations. Rickeeta comes from a strong Nyoongar family of actors, advocates and community people whose legacies extend beyond Nyoongar Country across the many nations on this continent. It's these footprints that've been laid before her that inform many of her ways of practice.

"I realised in my late teens that not every Nyoongar child had the upbringing that I had," said.

"That being; a language speaker in our household (my Dad), access to our cultural knowledge, consistent time on Country and practising our traditional dance and songs.

"Being told I was 'lucky to grow up with my culture' really ignited my passion to share and to teach it. I hope that the next generations will not view cultural access as a privileged upbringing and instead I hope it'll be the norm."

Rickeeta is often juggling many plates such as working through her family business Aboriginal Productions, being an Aboriginal Liaison Officer with Kings Park Botanic Garden and as a lecturer for the University of W.A. It's this strong foundation that has allowed Rickeeta to kick goals beyond the regular day to day scope of work, including establishing a cultural dance program in two of W.A.'s women's prisons.

With 70% of female Aboriginal prisoners being stuck in the recidivism cycle, Rickeeta has ambitions of extending her prison dance workshops into the outside, so women upon release will be able to engage with their families: allowing culture to fortify in safe spaces and adequately address behaviours that can lead to backsliding.

"Dance is a beautiful way to practise our culture, it's fun and active; but also involves learning language through song and cultural understanding behind the stories of each dance."

Much of Rickeeta's strength is seen in the form of when education and the arts meet to engage young folks, entire Nyoongar families and tie cultural practices that have thrived on this land since the dreaming into the present.

"My first priority is cultural continuation and providing a safe space for our next generation to learn their culture."



Images of Rickeeta. Pictures by Cole Baxter.



## Public Notice

### Consultation for review of Bass Gas Offshore Operations Environment Plan

**Beach Energy (Beach) supplies natural gas from offshore Victoria to the local market through existing infrastructure, including pipelines, offshore platforms, and onshore production facilities.**

In accordance with regulatory requirements, Beach has commenced planning and consulting for the 5-year review of the Bass Gas Offshore Operation Environment Plan (EP) to cover ongoing production operations.

Bass Gas Operations produce natural gas and condensate from the Yolla gas field in the Bass Strait. The gas field is serviced by the Yolla-A Offshore Platform (Yolla Platform), and an approximately 147 km subsea pipeline that transports the gas and liquids from the platform to the Victorian mainland near Kilcunda. Commercial production of gas from the Yolla field started in June 2006 and may extend to 2030.

The revised EP will include the operation of the offshore wells, Yolla Platform and pipeline in the Bass Strait in commonwealth and state waters, and the ongoing maintenance and inspections to ensure safe ongoing field operations.

Consultation for this EP commenced on 14 July 2025 and will close at 5pm AEST on 10 October 2025.

#### Invitation to consult with Beach

Beach consults with relevant persons so appropriate measures can be considered in response to objections or information received during consultation. Community information sessions and webinars will inform about the Bass Gas Operations. We invite culturally sensitive and open consultation with persons and organisations whose functions, interests, or activities may be affected by the activities described in the EP.

To register your interest in attending a webinar, please email [community@beachenergy.com.au](mailto:community@beachenergy.com.au) advising the session you would like to attend, and we will send you registration details.

#### Environment that may be affected (EMBA)

The map in this notice shows the largest geographic area where operational activities under the EP could potentially have a direct or indirect impact under worst-case scenarios. Within the EMBA, the environment values and sensitivities are defined, potential impacts are assessed, and control measures are developed to mitigate impacts.



The EMBA is divided into an operational area for activities defined in the EP, and a planning area where emergency response plans must be ready for activation in the unlikely event of an accident.

#### Further information

Please see the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority's (NOPSEMA) brochure titled 'Consultation on offshore petroleum environment plans' at [consultation.nopsema.gov.au](http://consultation.nopsema.gov.au) for information regarding consultation.

To arrange a meeting or seek further information, please contact Beach. For further project information scan the QR code or visit [engage.beach.com.au](http://engage.beach.com.au).



READ MORE

#### Consultation dates and information

Online consultation hub	<a href="http://engage.beachenergy.com.au">engage.beachenergy.com.au</a> Engage Beach, includes information in different formats including maps; diagrams; questions and answers; and detailed information sheets.	
Dedicated culturally sensitive First Nations information sessions (registration not required)	<b>Wonthaggi RSL, 60 Graham Street, Wonthaggi</b> Tuesday 19 August, 11am to 3pm (AEST) Wednesday 20 August, 6pm to 8pm (AEST)	
Open information sessions (registration not required)	<b>Wonthaggi RSL, 60 Graham Street, Wonthaggi</b> Tuesday 19 August, 6pm to 8pm (AEST) Wednesday 20 August, 11am to 3pm (AEST)	
Dedicated culturally sensitive First Nations online information sessions (webinars)	Tuesday 9 September, 7pm to 7.45pm (AEST) Wednesday 10 September, 2.15pm to 3pm (AEST)	<b>Please contact us to register for a webinar</b>
Open online information sessions (webinars)	Tuesday 9 September, 2.15pm to 3pm (AEST) Wednesday 10 September, 7pm to 7.45pm (AEST)	<b>Please contact us to register for a webinar</b>



# Building for success



WODONGA-based TVN On-Country – a 70 per cent First Nations owned construction company – has been awarded the title of 2025 Master Builders Victoria Regional Commercial Builder of the Year – Northern, for delivering the Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence, on Yorta Yorta Country in Shepparton.

Completed in 2024, the project is the largest ever awarded by the Victorian state government to a First-Nations-owned business.

The design of the building has deep cultural significance and was inspired by Yorta Yorta totems.

The building is shaped to resemble a Murray River turtle, the landscaping surrounds are designed to reflect emu eggs, while the facade is a celebration of artwork from local Yorta Yorta artists.

The Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence exceeded ambitious social impact targets

set by the client and the builder, including the number of Victorian Aboriginal people to work on the project and percentage of project expenditure with First Nations businesses.

TVN On-Country will go on to compete at Master Builder Victoria's Excellence in Construction Awards being held in Melbourne on August 8.

TVN On-Country Managing Director, Jebb Hutchison, said "this is the most meaningful and exciting project TVN On-Country will ever build".

"I am immensely proud of the social impact targets we achieved which have set a benchmark for the construction industry," Hutchison said.

"Our project team included Aboriginal trainees, apprentices and cadets.

"These young Mob are the next generation of construction leaders.

"Their strength and vision will create positive generational change for First Nations people – and that's an important legacy."



An aerial view of the Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence, on Yorta Yorta Country, Shepparton.



TVN On-Country team celebrate at the 2025 Master Builders Victoria Awards (Northern Region). (Pictures supplied)

**"These young Mob are the next generation of construction leaders. Their strength and vision will create positive generational change for First Nations people – and that's an important legacy."**



The internal courtyard of the Munarra Centre.

NGUNYA JARJUM INVITES  
COMMUNITY TO A

## Gala Dinner

TO CELEBRATE

# 30 Years

SEPTEMBER

FRIDAY | **12** | AT 6 PM

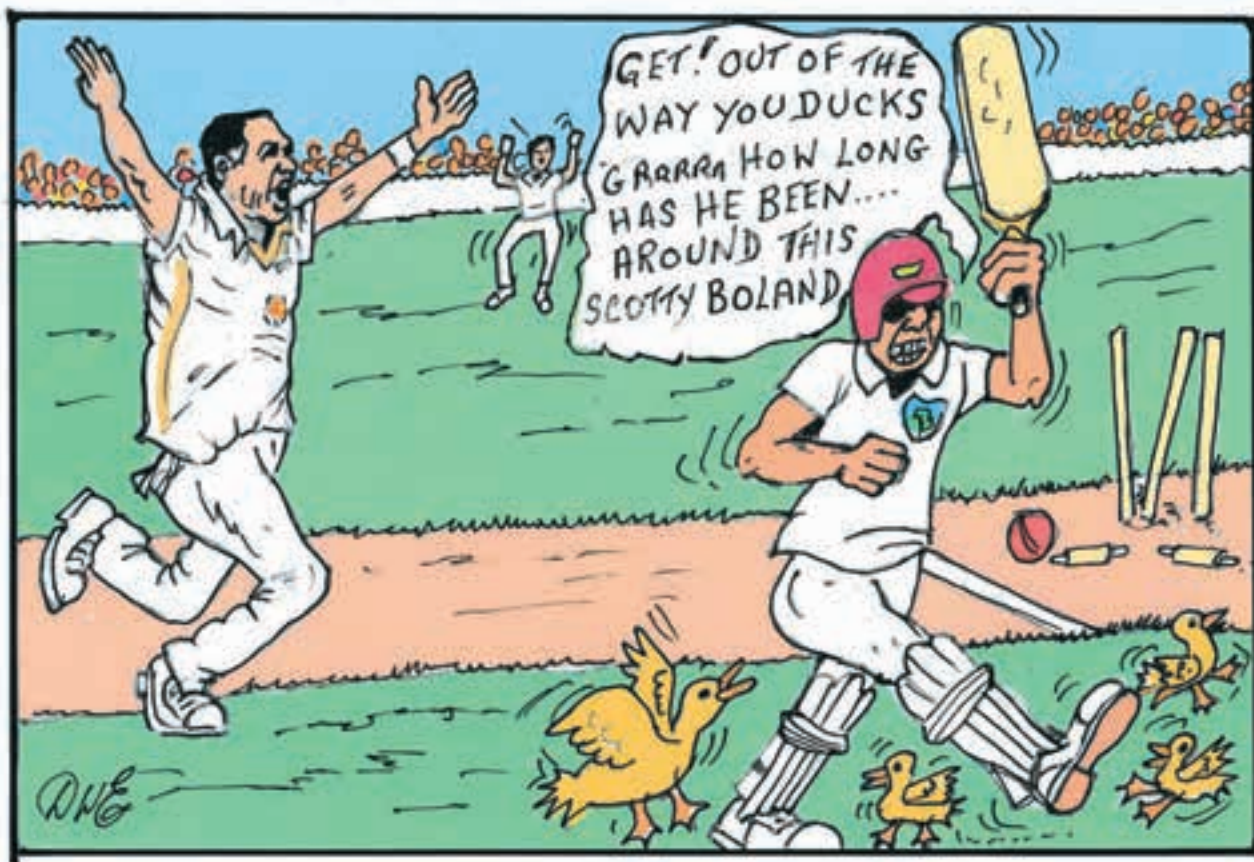
2025

BALLINA RSL CLUB  
1 Grant St, Ballina NSW 2478

Dress code: Semi-Formal  
Guests must be over 18 years



## Danny Eastwood's view



## Quote



**“If the government would only listen to us and work with us in genuine partnership in tackling crime in the Northern Territory, we wouldn't be stacking and racking in our prisons.”**

– Central Land Council deputy chair Barbara Shaw.

● See page 7

**Unquote'**

# Ignorance is nothing new

A recurring feature of Australia's colonial history has been the numerous occasions where English colonisers displayed a complete lack of understanding of First Nation knowledge systems. The after effects of that ignorance are still being felt by First Nation peoples to this day.

Over 250 years ago that ignorance, backed by superior weaponry, ultimately led to many violent acts and massacres during the 'Frontier Wars'.

One such misunderstanding took place right at the start of 'first contact' between representatives of the British Crown and First Nations defenders of Country.

In June 1770, a pivotal moment in Australian history unfolded when Lieutenant James Cook's ship, the *HM Bark Endeavour*, ran aground on a coral reef off the coast of Far North Queensland.

This reef lies within the Sea Country traditionally cared for by the Guugu Yimithirr people and several Eastern Yalanji Aboriginal clans, including the Wyamburr, Yuki Baja-Muliku, Kuku Bididji, Kuku Yalanji, and Kuku Nyungkul.

This encounter between First Nations custodians and European colonisers would become one of the earliest recorded instances of cross-cultural contact on Australian soil.

After the *Endeavour* was damaged, Cook and his crew spent six weeks repairing the ship at Waalumbaal Birri (Endeavour River), near present-day Cooktown.

According to Cooktown historian, Auntie Alberta Hornsby, the crew took turtles from a sacred breeding ground – an act that violated Guugu Yimithirr law.

These turtles were not only a vital part of the ecosystem but held spiritual significance.

Taking them without permission was a



serious offence.

Tensions escalated when the Guugu Yimithirr conducted a traditional grassland burn near the crew's campsite.

This practice, used to regenerate the land and attract kangaroos, also served as a spiritual cleansing ritual.

Misinterpreting the act as hostile, Lt Cook fired his musket, wounding a Guugu Yimithirr man.

This act of violence was deeply sacrilegious, as shedding blood on sacred ground was forbidden.

It should be noted the resilience shown by our Mob in the face of the lack of understanding by the colonisers.

Despite these transgressions, the Guugu Yimithirr sought peace.

A group of men visited the crew, and an Elder named Yabaarrigu offered a spear with a broken tip – a powerful symbol of peace.

Cook and his crew, despite the language barrier, understood and accepted the gesture.

The encounter at Waalumbaal Birri highlights the importance of cultural understanding, the consequences of miscommunication, and the enduring strength of Indigenous law and tradition.

By acknowledging and learning from these early encounters, we take steps toward a more truthful and inclusive understanding of our shared history.

A recent exhibition at the National Maritime Museum in Sydney featured a symbolic depiction of the turtles by Gail Mabo described in the 'first contact' event.

## A YARN WITH...



## Anton Saltmere Morning Islander (Lardil Mob)

**Favourite bush tucker?**  
Swamp turtle.

**Favourite other food?**  
Chinese.

**Favourite drink?**  
Coca Cola.

**Saltwater food?**  
Mud crabs. Just got home from catching four bucks.

**Favourite sport?**  
Rugby League. I barrack for the Broncos.

**Favourite holiday destination?**  
Caribbean Islands, especially Jamaica. I want to go there.

**Favourite movie?**  
*Power of One* with Morgan Freeman.

**What do you like in life?**  
Bush life because it is so quiet.

**What don't you like in life?**  
Too much noise.

**Which person would you most like to meet?**  
Mohammed Ali.

**Which people would you invite for a night around the campfire?**  
Wayne Bennett, the famous rugby league coach, and ex player Darren Lockyer.

**What is important to you?**  
My family, about three quarters on the island are family, and my dad Allan Saltmere is still alive.

**Who or what inspires you?**  
Seeing young people succeed.

**What would you do to better the situation for Indigenous people?**  
Try and get young people back to culture and traditional values. Get the phone out of their hands and replace it with tools.

## KOORI MAIL 100% ABORIGINAL-OWNED

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





Uncle Pete. Photo by Tree Faerie

# Vale Peter Birch-Marshall

It was on the lands of the Gadigal, where the saltwater carries ancient songlines across the country, that I first met Uncle Pete.

From that first introduction I called him brother.

I remember the energy of those men gathering at Circular Quay in Sydney – dancing, painting, bumming a cigarette, selling their art, sometimes asking for loose coins to numb the pain and yarning under the open sky.

They also ran amuck at times, but there was a certain intangible thirst, a deep yearning to reconnect.

These were the early days of Link-Up – a powerful and necessary organisation that gently held space for healing.

Through them, many of our Mob found a way back, tracing threads of identity, kin, and Country.

It was more than a service – it was a quiet revolution of belonging, stitching hearts and stories back together across this vast continent.

Before I even knew it, a decade later Uncle had made his way to our Bundjalung lands – It's where he found a deep sense of belonging and was warmly embraced by the community.

Through our cultural ways of adoption thanks to Uncle Mickey Kay and Aunty Linda Vidler, he became one of us.

Slowly, piece by piece, he had begun to put the jigsaw of his life back together.

What always shone through was his big heart – a generosity



Rhoda Roberts AO

that wrapped around you like a warm blanket.

Once you met him, you never forgot him.

He had this way of making you feel seen, heard, and truly special. Always listening. Always present. Always taking selfies.

Uncle Peter connected with everyone – from American music stars to local Elders, from community members to those just starting out. A true individual with many names, many stories.

Sometimes you'd hear people talking and suddenly realise – they were all talking about the one and only Uncle Pete as they referenced another name such as Jangala, Eccia or Tracker.

To Bluesfest's Uncle Peter Noble, he was a brother.

To many of us in the music industry, he was a quiet trailblazer – one of the first highly skilled and experienced Indigenous roadies in the country.

At a time when few of our Mob were rarely seen in those backstage spaces.

He carried more than just gear; he carried the weight of visibility, quietly proving that our people have a place in every corner of the music industry.

He began touring with some of the biggest names in the Australian music scene – legends like the Warumpi Band – before his skills saw him working with more mainstream acts, including Midnight Oil AC/DC, Guns N' Roses, and Pearl Jam.

Whether it was local icons or global superstars, Uncle Pete brought a quiet strength to every tour.

Later, he was appointed the stage manager for the Indigenous stage at Bluesfest, mentoring the next generation, ensuring every artist felt supported and proud to share their voice.

Uncle Pete understood the power of music, the power of gathering, and the deep spirit that lives in a well-told song or a perfectly lit stage.

He wasn't just behind the scenes – he was part of the spirit of it all.

When we held the first Boomerang Dreaming on the Bluesfest site he gathered with our young people from across our Bundjalung territories – from southeast Queensland through to northern New South Wales.

He stood there with open arms, sharing his hard-earned wisdom, his strength, his spirit.

He made those young men and boys feel like warriors, like

they belonged. Like they carried something ancient and powerful inside them.

That was Uncle, Vicky his partner by his side, walking in both worlds, holding space for healing.

But his was not a simple path.

It was a long journey – one that flowed across many Nations, weaving through pain, resilience, and learning.

A journey to find solace, to find home within himself.

Rapid Creek in the Northern Territory flows out to Darwin Harbour and is known by the Larrakia people as Gurinbey – meaning "elbow", a nod to the bend in the creek.

It's a sacred place, where waters curve like time, holding stories that reach back to the ancient ancestors.

It was here, beneath the birthing tree at Gurinbey, that Uncle Pete came into the world in 1959.

But like the creek, his life would be marked by many bends and turns.

Just as he took his first breaths and suckled as a newborn, the first twist came – he was taken from his mother, a Balangarra woman from the Kimberley, Ethel Birch, at just one week old.

A baby. Removed. Disconnected.

He was placed in the Retta Dixon Home in Darwin – one of so many stolen.

That place, for all its walls, could never hold the spirit of a boy who was born under a sacred tree.

His soul, though shaken, remained intact – seeking, roaming, remembering something older than the pain.

As a young boy adopted by Arthur and Lydia Marshall, he grew on the lands of the Yolngu in northeast Arnhem land and then to school on the lands of the Wallumedegal in Sydney's Epping

It would take decades. Many lands. Many mobs.

From the deserts to the saltwater, from bustling cities to quiet fire circles – Uncle Pete kept moving, listening, learning, giving.

Slowly, through culture, kinship, and ceremony, he found his way back.

He found himself finally connecting with his mother.

And when he did, he didn't hold it all for himself – he turned around and reached out his hands.

He gave back tenfold, offering love, laughter, and legacy to those who walked beside him.

● The wider community is showing how much they care for Uncle Pete by donating to a Go Fund to return him to his final resting place on his Country.

One of his wishes was to have his ashes left with his mother in Wyndham.

His daughter Elle, his partner Vicki and son Mitch are planning to take them up and host a celebration in Wyndham to send him off on Balangarra Country in the Kimberley.

Go Fund  
<https://gofund.me/1e5eaf08>



# The long, winding road to a climate-resilient Pacific

By POPPY JOHNSON



HELEN Tony's life in a small and low-lying coastal village in the South Pacific is made increasingly difficult by a changing climate.

Not only do rising seas and intensifying storms monster the shore and threaten homes, the global consequences of emitting more greenhouse gases extends to food and income security concerns for her family.

Ms Tony lives in the village of Unakap on Nguna, one of Vanuatu's small islands off the north coast of Efate and about 4,000km east of Cairns.

In the 15 years she's resided there, growing fruit and vegetables has become harder especially after cyclones that bring destructive insects in their wake.

Her husband is also catching fewer fish due to reef and ecosystem damage from extreme weather, higher seawater temperatures and ocean acidification.

Their family of five is able to make money to buy food from local markets but one of their income sources, the mats Ms Tony makes from pandanus leaves, has taken a hit.

To weave them, along with fans, purses and baskets, the leaves need to be dry but more rain than is typical has been shrinking her output and the cash she generates selling her wares.

Living in an archipelago vulnerable to volcanoes, earthquakes, tsunamis and landslides, ni-Vanuatu are no strangers to disaster and the long road to recovery that follows.

But the addition of climate change impacts and extreme weather events including more intense cyclones and storms are making it harder to bounce back.

## Cyclones

World Vision humanitarian emergency security affairs manager Pallen Abraham Philip says the country has always experienced cyclones but they are becoming stronger and increasingly hitting out of season.

"They're still in the recovery mode, then the next hits," he said.

Category five system Pam, to which Australia was a first responder, devastated the country in 2015, and there have been other severe storms since including twin tropical cyclones Judy and Kevin that tore similar pathways just days apart in 2023.

A lot of money is needed to help vulnerable regional and rural communities recover and adapt and there is at least some funding funnelled into Vanuatu through a complex web of instruments and programs.

On Nguna and neighbouring islands, dedicated global project the Green Climate Fund is supported by the Vanuatu government and humanitarian organisation Save the Children.

## Sea-level rise is not the only threat to island life for Australia's near neighbours, with sources of local income also under pressure from climate change.



Helen Tony from Unakap Village at her home on Nguna Island, Vanuatu. (Photos: AAP)



Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation cameraman Philip Merika sits on the front of a ferry leaving heading towards Efate Island, Vanuatu.



World Vision humanitarian emergency security affairs manager Pallen Abraham Philip.

Australia's \$50 million contribution is part of its broader \$100 million package of initiatives to foster preparedness including the Pacific Resilience Facility.

This, in turn, allows the Pacific to invest in small-grant but high-impact initiatives to help make communities disaster-ready.

Whitely Tasaruru, who is the Nguna and Pele area climate change manager within Vanuatu's Community-based Climate Resilience Project, says each village has its own set of issues and preferred fixes.

His job is partly about making sure various adaptation measures like coastal tree planting, sea wall construction and coral restoration mesh cohesively.

For Nguna, gradually relocating low-lying villages to higher ground on the island is the long-term goal.

In the meantime, the community wants to buy extra

time by protecting buildings and infrastructure, including the road connecting communities close to the shore.

Planting more vegetation and trees along the shoreline should help, Mr Tasaruru says, as will a planned sea wall in a spot known to be vulnerable to erosion.

But sometimes climate impact solutions can unintentionally create new problems.

## Sand mining

For example, work under way to build a road to higher ground for relocating households has been reliant on mining sand on the island's beach for the slab cement structure.

But extracting the sand has created openings and channels on the beach that are leaving nearby settlements more exposed to storm surge and wash damage.

"Many community members

here have concerns," Mr Tasaruru said.

He believes sourcing sand from Port Vila, the city on the mainland island of Efate, is a better option.

On neighbouring Pele, Salome Kalo from Pilliura village has been instrumental in getting solar-generated food drying up and running.

Located on sandy and therefore less productive soil, food security has become an issue for the village, especially when compounded by storms and unfavourable weather.

To give themselves more flexibility, villagers have been preserving fruit, vegetables and other produce using a solar-powered dryer that blows warm air to prevent moisture.

"It helps us a lot," Ms Kalo says.

But a few months ago, the dryer in her village was destroyed in a storm.

"We have to build that again this month."

Like on the neighbouring island, Pele communities have scouted out higher ground to move to over time.

Edward Lani, also from Pilliura village, expects their way of life to change when forced to relocate away from the beach.

"There are people who live along the coast, they depend entirely on the ocean for food but if they move inland, it would change their way of getting food for the household," he says.

But for Mr Lani, moving inland is not his biggest concern.

He is more worried young people will leave the island entirely to avoid worsening environmental conditions. — AAP



# Pacific nations propose an ocean reserve to protect ancestral waters



The proposed Melanesian Ocean Reserve.



AT the UN Ocean Conference last month, the governments of Solomon Islands and Vanuatu announced their

intention to create the Melanesian Ocean Reserve to safeguard the ancestral waters, homelands and peoples of the southwestern Pacific.

The area is one of the world's most biodiverse marine regions. Protecting it will secure the economic and cultural vitality of hundreds of distinct Indigenous peoples while furthering global climate, biodiversity, and ocean goals.

The Melanesian Ocean Reserve will be the first Indigenous-led multi-national ocean reserve on Earth. When complete, it will span at least 6 million square kilometres of ocean and islands – an area as vast as the Amazon rainforest. It will encompass the combined national waters of the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Papua New Guinea, and connect with the protected waters of the Exclusive Economic Zone of New Caledonia.

"For millennia, the Indigenous peoples of Melanesia have been the wisest and most effective stewards of these sacred waters.



Bleached coral on Nguna Island, Vanuatu.

That is why the governments of Melanesia are joining forces to create an unprecedented ocean reserve that honours our identities, livelihoods, and spiritual connections," said Solomon Islands Prime Minister Jeremiah Manele.

"It is an objective of our National Ocean Policy to establish this transboundary corridor of traditionally managed ocean space between our countries, and we are delighted that this is now happening," said Vanuatu's Minister for Environment Ralph Regenvanu. "The Melanesian Ocean Reserve will give the

governments and peoples of Melanesia the ability to do much more to protect our ancestral waters from those who extract and exploit without concern for our planet and its living beings. We hope our Indigenous stewardship of this vast reserve will create momentum for similar initiatives all over the world."

Although today's formal announcement is made by the governments of Vanuatu and the Solomons, the governments of Papua New Guinea and New Caledonia anticipate joining the Melanesian Ocean Reserve.

Today, the Solomon Islands

and Vanuatu are showing their willingness to commit to contribute all their archipelagic waters and areas beyond to the Melanesian Ocean Reserve. As a result, they will permit only sustainable economic activities consistent with Indigenous values in these waters.

The Melanesian Ocean Reserve is the brainchild of two highly respected Indigenous leaders who met for the first time and began sketching out the blueprint at the Convention on Biological Diversity meeting in Cali, Colombia last year:

● Trevor Mahaga, the Solomon Islands' Minister for Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management, and Meteorology

● Ralph Regenvanu, Vanuatu's Minister for Climate Change Adaptation, Energy, Environment, Meteorology, Geo-Hazards, and Disaster Management

Ministers Mahaga and Regenvanu fleshed out the Melanesian Ocean Reserve concept with the Honourable Jelta Wong, Papua New Guinea's Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources, with the support of the nonprofits Nia Tero and Islands Knowledge Institute (IKI).

Nia Tero, led by an Indigenous CEO and a majority-Indigenous

board, is a global facilitator of direct funding to Indigenous peoples. "What these Melanesian leaders are doing is giving voice to the hope of all Oceanic peoples – to be able to fully bring forward the dream and knowledge of our ancestors in the modern day and to care for the ocean and our planet in the way they deserve," said Nia Tero CEO Aulani Wilhelm.

The Islands Knowledge Institute, led by the Solomons-based Indigenous ecologist Dr. Edgar Pollard, has been the primary incubator of the Melanesian Ocean Reserve initiative, supporting deep conversations amongst country leaders and fostering a sense of motivating progress. "The Melanesian Ocean Reserve has progressed from an idea to a powerful platform amongst Melanesian leaders because it connects to an unmistakable truth in their lives: that treating the ocean as our home, in the deepest sense of the word, is the best protection," said Dr Pollard. "The excitement and inspiration driving the Melanesian Ocean Reserve stems from the chance at making this relationship real in the context of our countries at every level, from the tribe to the village to the state."

# Become a climate citizen



"WE will not wait for the waves to wash away our homes and infrastructure", was the declaration by the leader of the world's smallest

republic, just after the nation had used COP29 as a launchpad for the world's most innovative climate resilience project.

"While the world debates climate action, we must take proactive steps to secure our nation's future," continued President of Nauru David Adeang.

A member of the Climate Vulnerable Forum made up of developing nations on the front line of climate change, Nauru's government is challenging investors from across the world to be a part of a bold solution not just for the nation, but globally.

The country is embarking on a project that will reform their nation in the face of climate change, which as well as dealing with issues like food and water security, includes the "Higher



President of Nauru David Adeang.

Ground Initiative" – relocating almost their entire population from the coast to higher ground.

This project is huge. Some may call it audacious. And it's expensive.

Yet the man leading the charge to raise a large portion of the funds through a unique citizenship program targeting climate investors and entrepreneurs says there is already significant interest from around the world from those wanting to become 'climate citizens'.

New Zealander Edward Clark

has an extensive background in international banking, financial crime and compliance, which is exactly why the Government of Nauru appointed him as CEO of the Nauru Economic and Climate Resilience Citizenship Program.

Mr Clark said unlike some citizenship by investment programs that have been the subject of controversy, the tightly managed Nauru program was about "flipping the narrative for climate vulnerable countries."

"We want those who are passionate about the global future to become citizens because our goal is to transform Nauru from being a passive recipient of climate funding into an incubator for climate innovation."

By that he means Nauru can become a model for how truly sustainable communities and their underlying infrastructure can be developed.

"Climate entrepreneurs can partner with Nauru to develop new solutions," he said.

"Ecopreneurs can benefit from



Become a climate citizen and help keep Nauru clean.

the necessary seed funding to develop new technologies and solutions, and Nauru will benefit from being a testing ground for new and cost-effective solutions."

Mr Clark said while the citizenship program is new, he's

elated at the interest.

"The citizenship applications we have received are from those across the world who want to invest in climate resilience and be part of a higher purpose," he said.

– AAP



# NSW Treaty Commission embarks on statewide community dialogue

The NSW Treaty Commission is proud to announce the official commencement of Treaty community dialogues across New South Wales, beginning August 2025.

This is a truly independent, Aboriginal-led process. It is not run by Aboriginal Affairs NSW, and it is not a government-led consultation.

Instead, it is being led by three independent Aboriginal Commissioners – Aden Ridgeway, Dr Todd Fernando and Naomi Moran – who have been directly appointed by the new Minister for Aboriginal Affairs in NSW, with a clear mandate: to go to community, listen without interference, and understand whether Aboriginal people in NSW want a treaty or formal agreement-making process – and if so, what that might look like.

The commission will spend the next 12 months engaging with Aboriginal communities right across the state, through both regional visits and an open online submission process. This work will help shape a report to government in late 2026 – but the process, the conversation and the leadership belongs to Aboriginal people.

The NSW Treaty Commission will begin its work in the following towns and regions:



NSW Treaty Commissioners Todd Fernando, Naomi Moran, and Aden Ridgeway.

### Far West

- Broken Hill
- Wilcannia
- Menindee

### South Coast

- Nowra
- Batemans Bay
- Eden

These regional visits will include large community gatherings and smaller localised sessions to ensure everyone has a safe and meaningful opportunity to speak.

Further dates, venues and session details will be released soon.

This is a process of truth and reckoning. A moment for our people to lead the conversations –

on our terms, in our own voices, and with cultural integrity at the centre.

This Treaty work is guided by cultural responsibility, care and accountability – not government bureaucracy.

### Transparency

It has been built from the ground up, with transparency and independence at its core.

We know many processes in the past have let our people down. That's why this process is different. That's why it matters that it is being led by independent Aboriginal Commissioners, chosen by and for community, and entrusted with this work.

### Stay Connected

A dedicated NSW Treaty Commission website and official social media platforms will launch soon, providing up-to-date information, event details, community resources and ways to stay connected throughout the Treaty process.

To ensure every voice is heard – from the coast to the desert, the city to the bush – the commission will also launch a public submission portal, allowing individuals, families, groups and organisations to share their views in writing, audio or video.

All Aboriginal people in NSW are welcome to make a submission.

This work is for our Elders, our young ones, and the generations to come.

– By NAOMI MORAN

**More information about each location, how to participate, and how to submit online will be released in the coming weeks.**

# Invest in young people instead of locking them up

A coalition of Northern Territory community organisations, Northern Territory Council of Social Service (NTCOSS) and leaders are calling on the Northern Territory Government to abandon its proposal to remove diversion as an option for over a dozen further offences.

They are also raising serious concerns about the government's announcement of forthcoming changes to the Youth Justice Act, the details of which have not been made public.

These undisclosed reforms, combined with the reclassification of offences, risk further undermining access to diversion and entrenching punitive responses to children and young people.

Community leaders are urging greater investment in community-based youth diversion programs, which are proven to reduce offending among children and young people and prevent future crime.

Programs like Brother To Another – an outcome focused, social and emotional wellbeing service for young men – are helping young people turn their lives around, supporting them back into education and employment.

Data shows that 90% of the young people engaged intensively by the program experience major improvements: reduced offending and incarceration, improved social connection, and increased attendance in education.

On Groote Eylandt, youth crime dropped from 346 to just 17 over three years after local community-led initiatives employed residents to proactively support at-risk young people.

Recently, the NT Coroner handed down 32 recommendations in response to the 2019 fatal shooting of Kumanjayi Walker – including a call for the NT Government to provide community-led diversion services for young people.

Youth diversion and restorative justice programs are vital to a functioning justice system.

When done well, the needs and interests of victims are equally considered, while also diverting young people away from courts.

Community-led restorative approaches not only help victims recover and heal, but also provide young people with consequences, accountability and the

support they need to change their behaviour.

The NT already incarcerates children at four times the rate of any other jurisdiction in Australia, with approximately 98% of those in detention being Aboriginal. Dismantling diversion – and failing to be transparent about further changes to the Youth Justice Act – is a missed opportunity to address the root causes of offending among young people.

We need more diversion pathways and opportunities – not fewer– because once someone is imprisoned, the likelihood of them returning is high.

Pushing children into an overstretched court system means months of incarceration, delayed consequences, and an increased risk of reoffending – often with more serious outcomes.

These delays also fail to recognise that it is often in the best interest of victims to have matters dealt with efficiently and constructively.

Community-based alternatives hold young people accountable in ways that are meaningful to victims, young people and their communities.

They are more effective than incarceration, usually cost much less and are far more effective at repairing relationships.

We call on the government to be courageous in leading the Territory and to increase their investment in community-led, restorative justice and diversion.

Only by addressing the needs of children, young people and their families will we create safer communities.

**Craig Kelly, CEO, Anglicare NT**  
**Gerard McGeough, CEO, Victims of Crime NT**  
**Kirsten Wilson, Advocacy and Campaign Coordinator, Justice Reform Initiative**  
**Clare Horsfall, Senior Manager NT, Jesuit Social Services**  
**Leon Tripp, Interim CEO, The GAP Youth and Community Centre**  
**Stephanie Holmes, Executive Officer, Association of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies NT (AADANT)**  
**Sally Sievers, CEO, Northern Territory Council of Social Service (NTCOSS)**

The **Koori Mail** welcomes your Letters to the Editor. Preference will be given to submissions of interest to Indigenous Australians.

Please include your town and State of residence, and daytime telephone number for checking purposes. Items may be edited and reproduced.

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## KEEPING YOUR SAY SHORT AND SWEET

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

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

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

the privacy of individuals mentioned.

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



# Healing through culture and connection



Gillian King was born on Larrakia Country with connections to the Gurindji, Noongar Whadjuk and Noongar Balardong peoples, and the Great South West of Western Australia. Gillian has been a participant, co-facilitator and leading facilitator with the National Empowerment Project, delivering in the community and in Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women. Gillian is a Western Australian wildflower therapist and has offered healing from Country to groups such as the Department of Communities, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) playgroups, Aboriginal Women's leadership workshops, and the Stolen Generations. Recently, Gillian has participated in the Wadjemup Project as a self-care facilitator to women from the Kimberley, the Pilbara, the Murchison, the Goldfields and the Great Southern region of WA.

my own cultural lens, and I meet people where they're at.

In recent times, I've worked with younger participants – many of whom have grown up navigating fast-paced digital lives and social media – but who still carry the same longing for identity, for culture, and for understanding where they come from.

What surprised me was how ready they were to talk about colonisation, about identity loss, and the struggles they face. They came with open hearts and strong voices, and often, they taught me as much as I taught them.

Participants consistently tell me the most valuable part of the program is the safe cultural space. For many, it's the first time they've been in a room where they feel seen, heard, and not judged. Some come in thinking they're alone in their struggles – then they realise others have been through the same. There's a deep sense of relief and release in that realisation.

We also see real outcomes. One young man I worked with started the program feeling disconnected and unsure of his path. By the end, he had taken control of his health, begun a traineeship, and became an advocate not just for himself but for his family. These are the ripple effects of empowerment.

At Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women, I've facilitated the CSEWB Program multiple times. In 2022, the women created a mural representing their healing journey through the Social and Emotional Wellbeing wheel. In 2024, they created a powerful video in partnership with the

Department of Justice. These projects weren't just art – they were acts of truth-telling, of reclaiming identity, and of building cultural pride behind prison walls.

Even after graduation, many women stay connected to what they learned. Some have rejoined their families, some are leading in their own communities. Others have continued on with training and work. While not every story ends neatly, the seeds planted during the program often continue to grow long after the final session.

The truth is our people carry so much. But they also carry incredible knowledge, wisdom, and strength. The CSEWB Program doesn't give them that – it reminds them of what's already there.

Being a facilitator of this program is one of the most meaningful roles I've ever had. It's not just about running workshops – it's about honouring our ancestors, walking gently with our people, and creating space for healing through culture and connection.

As I often say at the end of each program: Dabakan Koorliny Moorditj Bidi – go slowly, walk strongly on a good path.

**Gillian King**  
Facilitator – National Empowerment Project (CSEWB), Langford Aboriginal Association.

● This column is part of an ongoing series supplied by the Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention at the University of WA.

As a proud Noongar/Gurindji woman and long-time facilitator of the Cultural, Social and Emotional Wellbeing (CSEWB) Program, I have walked alongside many of our people on their journeys of healing, reconnection and empowerment. Over the past seven years delivering the program through the National Empowerment Project (NEP) with Langford Aboriginal Association, in partnership with the University of Western Australia, I've witnessed firsthand the strength that lies within our culture, community and shared stories.

The CSEWB Program was created by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people, grounded in the lived experiences of our communities. It focuses on our identity and cultural strengths, addressing the ongoing impacts of colonisation, trauma, and loss while uplifting the power of connection – to Country, mind and body, kinship, spirit, and community. The program is holistic and healing. It doesn't come from a deficit approach. Instead, it celebrates what's already within us.

Each session is an opportunity to unpack complex issues in a culturally safe space. We explore topics like intergenerational trauma, grief and loss, racism, and lateral violence – but we always bring it back to resilience, pride, reconciliation and hope. The structure of the program allows space for yarning, creativity, reflection, movement and ceremony. We honour Aboriginal knowledge systems and ways of being.

For me as a facilitator, this role has been deeply transformational. While I've supported many others through the program, I've also grown personally. Over time, I've shifted from being a NEP participant, co-facilitator, and lead facilitator or "teacher" of content to a "holder" of space. I've learned that every group is different, and that deep listening



Vision board activity as part of the program.



**"Participants consistently tell me the most valuable part of the program is the safe cultural space. For many, it's the first time they've been in a room where they feel seen, heard, and not judged."**

– not just hearing, but truly listening and feeling with spirit – is one of the most powerful things we can offer.

As facilitators, we are not immune to life's pressures. Ensuring safety – emotional, cultural, and psychological – remains paramount. Exploring trauma is deeply layered, and safe spaces are essential. The strength of the NEP lies in its conversations (yarning), in filling

the gaps, and in its holistic approach to the individual across all CSEWB domains.

One of the key things I've learned is to adapt to the needs of the group in front of me. I no longer feel the need to rush through content. Instead, I make space for Mob to process, to share, to grieve, laugh and celebrate. That's where the real healing happens. I bring my humour, my lived experience,



# Strong community-driven approach may help in overcoming vaping



VAPING is an issue which has become prominent in the last few years in Australia, with its use continuing to grow exponentially.

As First Nations people, we know the devastating effects that tobacco use and smoking continues to have on our communities.

From the early period of British colonisation, Indigenous people were given tobacco as well as flour and sugar by the British.

Following on from this, successive policies and practices involved our people being paid for our labor in tobacco, creating a widespread normalisation and dependence on it.

The effect of the addiction to nicotine upon our people was exploited by the British.

Not only was Indigenous labor paid for with tobacco, but also cultural knowledge, artefacts and other sacred objects were used for the benefit of European researchers.

Despite this destructive history, most Indigenous people today do not smoke, whilst overall tobacco use amongst our communities has dropped significantly over the past 20 years.

These are very important facts that we must acknowledge and celebrate.

This has been achieved through the dedicated work of our people working in the health sector on the ground in our communities over many decades.

It is also important to note that there is still a long way to go. Today, around 50% of deaths of our people over the age of 45 are directly linked to tobacco use.

With this in mind, it is important to understand how the current

growth of vaping threatens to have extremely harmful effects for our people's long-term health and well-being.

Vaping was first touted as a way for long-term smokers to transition away from smoking and effectively quit.

However, it has become apparent that these devices are being specifically marketed to young people through bright colours and fruity flavours, which is creating a new demographic of nicotine dependent individuals.

There are many myths surrounding vaping that are often accepted as fact. One of these myths is that vaping is a healthier alternative to smoking and does not cause long-term health issues like tobacco does.

This is just not true, as vapes contain thousands of chemicals harmful to human health, with current research starting to highlight the detrimental health outcomes of vaping.

On top of this, one standard vape can contain the amount of nicotine equivalent to 50 cigarettes.

Many users are going through a single vape in a matter of a few days.

Over the last few years, particularly since the covid pandemic, the use of vaping has skyrocketed amongst the population, particularly within the younger generation.

For us as Indigenous people, this trend is very concerning.

In my own employment role as an Indigenous person working in smoking and vaping cessation within NSW, I have directly seen the negative impacts of vaping and how it has become socially accepted amongst our communities.



Cancer Council NSW vaping workshop.

The reality is that many of our people who are current vapers were not previously tobacco smokers.

I strongly believe that it is going to take significant work on the ground by Indigenous people to change the current situation, similar to what was done and continues to be done with addressing the issue of tobacco use.

The federal government has been painstakingly slow to address this issue, leading to vaping infiltrating the Australian market and community.

Statistics released in 2023 show how for the first time since the 1990s, tobacco-smoking rates amongst the teenage demographic have risen.

This change can be directly linked to the rise of vaping over the past five years, as dual use of e-cigarettes and cigarettes is becoming commonplace.

Current statistics also show that if an individual vapes then they are significantly more likely to take up cigarette smoking.

I believe that it is quite apparent that we cannot rely on federal or state governments to adequately address this issue.

It is deeply important our communities continue to work to improve our health outcomes.

This is an act of Indigenous resistance and self-determination.

The amazing work of the Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) groups within both NSW and

nationally is both inspiring and highly important in promoting a healthy smoke-free lifestyle for our people.

The innovative and community tailored work TIS Mob do to address vaping and tobacco use within our communities is essential in creating sustainable long-term positive changes.

Their work must be celebrated and adequately supported.

I am an optimist at heart and I believe this challenge of vaping is just another hurdle that we can collectively overcome with a strong community-driven approach.

**CAMERON MANNING – Gomerioi.**  
Aboriginal Tobacco Control Specialist, Cancer Council NSW.

# Hepatitis B risks revealed in study

By KEIRA JENKINS



A STUDY of more than 700 people living with a unique strain of hepatitis B, predominantly affecting Indigenous people, has found severe risks to liver health.

The impacts on liver health from a unique strain of chronic hepatitis B, which predominantly affects First Nations people, have been revealed in a study.

Analysing the C4 hepatitis B strain among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, researchers from Menzies School of Health Research found a severe type of liver disease among those living with the infection.

"The things we worry about when people have hepatitis B as a chronic infection, if they get liver damage, which can progress to liver cirrhosis or liver failure, and they are also at higher risk of liver cancer," study lead and Menzies Hepatitis B program lead Jane Davies said.

"This C4 sub-genotype, when

we looked at it in the lab at the very detailed genetics of it, it looked like it was very aggressive with respect to these two things."

The study confirmed the lab findings by analysing clinical data from more than 780 people across the Northern Territory, Professor Davies said.

22 per cent of people in this cohort had significant liver damage, and 16 per cent of those had cirrhosis, which is severe scarring on the liver, which can cause problems with the organ's functioning.

"We've followed people over time, we've looked at different markers of the virus as part of their clinical care and have confirmed there is significantly higher rates of liver damage within the population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have this very specific sub-genotype of chronic hepatitis B.

"Under current Australian guidelines, 25 per cent of the cohort studied are receiving treatment," Prof Davies said.

Researchers explored the potential impact of using World Health Organisation expanded

treatment guidelines for people living with C4 hepatitis B.

Prof Davies said under the expanded guidelines half of those not currently being treated would be eligible for treatment.

While expanding the guidelines is a nuanced conversation, Prof Davies believes it is common sense to do everything possible to support healthy liver function for those living with hepatitis B.

"My personal opinion is that we should be treating as many people as we can where there is evidence that we can reduce their risk of progression to liver failure and liver cancer," she said.

"That's where the really crucial question comes – is there evidence in this very specific sub-genotype in our setting that we should be immediately rolling out treatment to this more than roughly 50 per cent of people.

"That's definitely a nuanced conversation with pros and cons."

The study, representing the latest findings from the Hep B PAST program, which aims to eliminate hepatitis B in the NT, was published in *BMC Infectious Diseases*.



Researchers from the Menzies School of Health Research.



# Preterm birth journey shapes passion in maternal health



Jacqueline-Rose boards a Care Flight to Darwin.



WITH her own preterm-birth journey inspiring her advocacy for stronger representation of First Nations voices in maternal health, Marisa Smiler-Cairns understands the difficult situation mothers in regional and remote Australia face.

A Yolŋu and Wardaman woman, Marisa is a third-generation Aboriginal Health Practitioner, trained by the same Aboriginal medical service that supported generations of her own family.

As a first-time mother to be, Marisa enjoyed a problem-free pregnancy with her own background in health education guiding her journey.

"I had always felt incredibly fortunate with how healthy both my pregnancy and I had been. I didn't smoke and had never smoked, and I attended all my antenatal appointments," Smiler-Cairns said.

"Like the many health professionals I had seen throughout my journey, I was confident that I would carry to full-term."

That would all change one evening when on the way to dinner, Marisa noticed a slow leak.

Initially, clinical staff at the hospital believed it wasn't amniotic fluid.

However, after testing, it was confirmed Marisa had a hind water leak and doctors and midwives made the decision to admit her overnight for further monitoring.

"I remember sitting in the hospital bed after my partner had gone home to get my hospital bag, feeling scared, upset, and completely out of control," Marisa recalls.

"All of my plans for the birth suddenly felt like they had been swept away. I was deeply concerned for my unborn baby and overwhelmed by a sense of uncertainty."

Shortly after her partner returned, Marisa's waters broke completely, and labour began soon after.

"I had heard the term premature baby and knew that some babies were born too early, but I didn't have a deep understanding of what preterm birth really meant or how serious and life-changing it could be for some families, and yet here I was experiencing it first-hand."

In September of 2019, Jacqueline-Rose was born at 36 weeks weighing 2.68kg.

Since Marisa had given birth at Katherine Regional Hospital, there had been talk of flying her to Royal Darwin Hospital.

"Thankfully doctors decided being transported to Darwin wasn't necessary and that other than a heart murmur that lasted a few weeks after birth, Jacqueline was doing well," Smiler-Cairns said.

However, from around one year old, Jacqueline was diagnosed with Chronic Suppurative Lung Disease.

This led to multiple care flights to Darwin due to how severely unwell she would become.

"The first four years of her life were incredibly challenging — filled with hospital stays, uncertainty, and constant worry,"

Marisa remembers.

"Despite all of this, there have been many beautiful moments and milestones we've celebrated with Jackie. She's shown so much strength and resilience, and today, you would never guess that she was born preterm."

In 2021, Jacqueline-Rose would become a big sister as the family welcomed Mathew Ronald born at 37 weeks.

Marisa's personal journey of preterm birth has led her to a transition into research, a field she has been dedicated to since 2022 with the Maternal Health Team at Menzies School of Health Research.

Smiler-Cairns said preventing early birth matters because "every child deserves a strong, healthy start in life".

"I think about how fragile and formative those first moments are, and how much of a difference it makes when a baby is born full-term," she said.

"I've spoken with and worked alongside many women who have been flown from regional hospitals to major city hospitals for urgent medical care. While some have shared moments of

hope or brief positives from the experience, many describe it as deeply frightening and overwhelming.

Smiler-Cairns said beyond the emotional toll, these women frequently deal with cultural disconnection, financial stress, and discrimination within the healthcare system.

"These challenges are real, and they deserve to be recognised and addressed."

Marisa is now a key part of the Commonwealth-funded Every Week Counts National Preterm Birth Prevention Program which is helping to improve pregnancy outcomes for more women with particular emphasis on First Nations mothers.

This national program, a partnership between the Australian Preterm Birth Prevention Alliance and Women's Healthcare Australasia, brings together obstetricians, midwives, GPs, sonographers, neonatologists with consumers and quality improvement experts from maternity hospitals across the country, to safely reduce rates of early birth.



Marisa with Jacqueline and Mathew.



Maari Ma CEO, Richard Weston.

## Addressing lead levels in children



MAARI MA Health Aboriginal Corporation has renewed calls as a matter of urgency for a new government approach to address high lead levels in Aboriginal children in far west New South Wales.

The call comes after the Far West Local Health District released the latest report into lead levels in Broken Hill children.

The report showed that more than 700 children aged one to five years attended for blood lead screening in 2024.

Of those children tested, 26% were Aboriginal and 68% of those children had blood lead levels above the guideline, compared to 35% of non-Aboriginal children screened.

Maari Ma CEO, Richard Weston, said it's not acceptable to see this significant discrepancy year after year.

"We are not seeing any change even though we have been working with Aboriginal children under five years of age for many years providing lead testing, health education and intensive multidisciplinary case management, he said.

"We've said time and time again there needs to be a new and targeted approach for Aboriginal children and families as part of the broader community program.

"While we've been accessing more Aboriginal children and working with families to provide the initial and ongoing testing and whatever treatments that may be required, it's clearly not enough.

"The gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children's lead levels remains unacceptably high and we urgently need to look at new ways to address this.

"We have recommended for a long time that the community program here in Broken Hill has a greater focus on Aboriginal children as it is Aboriginal children who are carrying the greater burden of high lead levels in Broken Hill. "We have also been recommending that the government focuses on housing as there's a strong link between blood lead levels and the quality of housing in Broken Hill for Aboriginal families.

"We are asking the NSW Government to act now and treat the unacceptably high level of lead in Aboriginal children in Broken Hill as a high priority Closing the Gap issue that needs to be addressed with intense action and a greater sense of urgency than we've seen to date." Mr Weston said.





# Influenza isn't as scary if you're vaccinated.

Protect you and your mob this winter.

**Book your flu vaccine today at your  
Aboriginal Medical Service, GP or pharmacy**

[healthdirect.gov.au/nswfluvaccine](https://healthdirect.gov.au/nswfluvaccine)







Smoking ceremony.

# Elders gift Kurnu name Tirkangkaku to university



ADELAIDE University is proud to stand with First Nations people and to be the first university in Australia to have provision for an Aboriginal name.

Tirkangkaku – meaning *Place of Learning* – is a gift from the Kurna People who represent more than 65,000 years of continuous knowledge and discovery.

It honours the university's connection to Country and its commitment to ensuring the transformative potential for all.

The name emerged through collaboration, proposed by Senior Kurna Elder, Dr Uncle Lewis Yarlupurka O'Brien AO, in consultation with Aboriginal staff and the University of South Australia's Purkarninthe Elders in Residence with agreement from Uncle Rod O'Brien.

Cultural consent was received from Kurna Warra Karrpanthi and endorsed by the Adelaide University Transition Council.

"This is a proud moment in the collective histories of Adelaide University, the state of South Australia and the nation as a whole, marking an important step in embedding First Nations culture and truth-telling for new generations," say Professors David Lloyd and Peter Høj AC, co-Vice Chancellors, Adelaide University.

"Tirkangkaku represents a convergence of where people, communities and disciplines will meet in two-way knowledge exchange and step forward together through excellence and equity with a deep commitment to togetherness and an intertwined future."

Adelaide University respectfully acknowledges the Kurna, Boandik and Barngarla First Nations Peoples and their Elders past and present who are the Traditional Owners of lands where the university's campuses are located.

"Adelaide University will build on the legacies of its foundation institutions to break down intergenerational cycles of

disadvantage and ensure that First Nations perspectives and knowledges inform outstanding research and innovative teaching to define a new chapter," says Professor Steve Larkin, Deputy Vice Chancellor Indigenous, Adelaide University.

"Learning is never passive and is reflected in the Kurna suffix 'nindi', which means becoming or transforming into – and this is the spirit in which Tirkangkaku is anchored."

Adelaide University has introduced a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pathway program to support students in forging their path through university studies and will launch an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy that will advance an inclusive and responsive institution to strengthen Indigenous knowledge, partnerships, and outcomes.

A piece of First Nations-led artwork is now being commissioned to support the integration of Tirkangkaku into the institution's visual identity.



Adelaide University is the first university in Australia to have provision for an Aboriginal name.



Shontara Hill and Gwendelyn Mick.

## Trainee community health workers in rural Queensland



FOR CQUniversity students Gwendelyn Mick and Shontara Hill, studying health care is more than a career, it's a commitment to their community, their culture, and each other.

The pair are currently employed as Trainee Community Health Workers in the rural Queensland town of Woorabinda where they have strong generational ties to community care.

As part of their traineeship, both women are completing their Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care.

"We both applied for traineeships and enrolled in the course but didn't know until we started!" Gwendelyn said.

"We are related through marriage. I am her aunty as she is my partner's niece.

Gwendelyn said having a family member in the same course is great 'as we lean on each other, both inside and outside of work'.

"We started the course in February and have been supporting each other through the process," she said.

Previously working in education and aged care, Gwendelyn, 40, spent 12 years as a teacher's aide before shifting her focus to community health.

Her decision to return to the workforce after having a child was driven by her passion for helping others.

"I've seen generations grow up and now I see some of the kids I taught in high school coming into the clinic with their own kids," she said.

For her niece Shontara, 21, a career in community health is a way for her to reconnect with her roots.

"I lived in Rockhampton but wanted to come back home to Woorabinda to be with my grandmother," said Shontara.

"I was excited to learn about the job opportunity and chance to complete the course. My nan was a health worker, and she still works part-time. Now I work in the same office that she worked in. It is nice to follow in her footsteps and then pass down that experience."

The duo both admit the course has presented challenges, but credit CQU and their support networks for helping them stay on track.

"It was difficult at the beginning. Some of our studies overlapped with clinic work and we had to find the balance," said Gwendelyn.

"At the start we didn't really know how to navigate our studies but now we are smashing through them with additional support," Shontara added.

Both women said they hope to use their work to honour the generations who paved the way and empower those still to come.

"I think there is a gap within the workforce, especially with young ones, that maybe don't have the confidence or shame to work or do their best. They need the right support and environment around them," said Shontara.

"You're never too old, or young to study, just go for it. There is always someone looking up to you, so it is important to do the best you can do," Gwendelyn agreed.



# Aboriginal perspective to agriculture

By MARION WILLIAMS



JOSH Gilbert is doing ground-breaking work, bringing an Aboriginal perspective to agriculture.

The Worimi man who describes himself as an academic and a farmer is exploring how agriculture can bring economic development opportunities to Mob.

He is doing a PhD on Indigenous agriculture at Charles Sturt University, but his work already led Penguin Random House to approach him about writing a book. His book *Australia's Agricultural Identity – An Aboriginal yarn* was published in May.

"We have an amazing story around agriculture," Mr Gilbert said. "We have the oldest continuous farming community in

the world who understands farming better than anyone else, but we don't take that opportunity."

He grew up in Boorowa on Wiradjuri land until he was around ten when his mother, a schoolteacher, was promoted. They returned to Worimi Country where he has been ever since.

Mr Gilbert comes from a long line of farmers. His family history is captured in the journals of the *Australian Agricultural Company*, among the earliest written records of Australia's post-colonisation agricultural practices.

He reconnected with his agricultural roots while studying commerce and law at the University of Newcastle.

"Agriculture really spoke to me. From there I have been on this journey to develop agriculture and farming practically," he said.

Ninety percent of the way through his law degree, Mr Gilbert dropped out to focus on

agriculture.

He combines his academic studies with working on the farms of his parents and parents-in-law until he can buy his own patch.

Mr Gilbert sits on 14 boards and committees including the Australian Conservation Foundation. He is an advisor to the Future Drought Fund Consultative Committee, the CSIRO's Agriculture and Food Group, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's First Nations Trade and Investment Advisory Group.

Mr Gilbert is in demand as a speaker and has been interviewed many times.

"There are a few people doing it, but it is really just starting out," he said. "I am lucky to have the opportunity to do what I do at the time I am doing it."

The book focuses on the post-colonisation involvement of Mob in farming given "the pre-colonisation side has been

proved by people like Bruce Pascoe".

It draws a lot on his family's personal stories of farming sheep and cattle for 200 years.

"It is articulating our involvement since colonisation and what it should be in the future," Mr Gilbert said.

The industry's current structures work against Aboriginal connection to the land, to the detriment of Australian agriculture.

"Ownership gives us the ability to access Country and then building culture through agriculture for that broader perspective rather than non-Koori farmers just thinking about what can be controlled within the boundaries of an individual property."

Culture also brings a different relationship with livestock, one full of grace.

"There is a whole raft of beautiful stories, particularly

recorded from the Northern Territory, about things like singing in language to calm stock," he said.

His book unpacks ancient practices that can be used alongside those commonly used today. One example is firestick farming – burning as done for millennia to rest and restore the landscape, which could later be used for grazing.

He is critical of farming that is based on short-term financial goals instead of providing food for society decently, and of throwing recent science at problems.

"Why wouldn't we use Indigenous knowledge that has been around for such a long time versus things that are very recent and not tested," Mr Gilbert said.

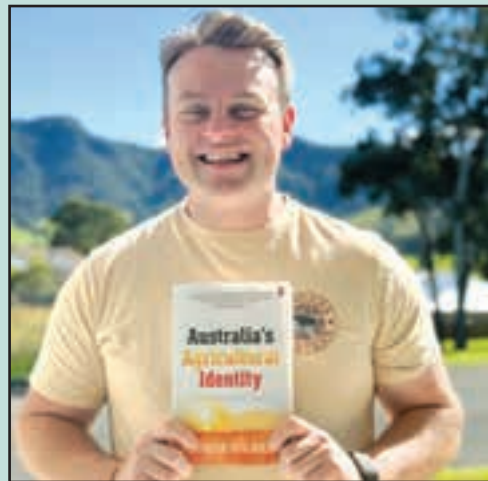
"If you have the oldest, longest-spanning history book in the library telling you how this country has been perfected over time, why not listen to that instead of modern science."



Josh at the farm on Worimi Country.



Josh with Uncle Pat Connolly at CSU event.



Josh with his book.

# Literacy Foundation reveals refreshed brand identity



THE Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF) recently revealed its new logo and refreshed brand identity that reflects their community-led values, celebrates First Nations storytelling and honours the diverse cultures and communities they work with.

Founded 21 years ago, the ILF has evolved into a national community-driven organisation working with over 500 remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia through the Book Supply, Book Buzz, Community Publishing, Create and Pamela Lofts Bequest programs.

These programs provide books and early childhood literacy resources, publish books by community for community, and also run book writing and illustration workshops.

"We felt it was time to update the brand to represent and incorporate the communities and individuals who are at the heart of the work we are so proud to do," ILF CEO Ben Bowen says.

"We needed the new brand to showcase the rich diversity and vibrant cultures of the communities we engage with, and to create a visual identity that truly speaks to those we serve."

The new brand was developed



Being part of the story.

in collaboration with First Nations creative agency Cause/Affect, led by Waanyi and Kalkadoon woman Keisha Leon following a consultative process involving staff, board members, and community input.

"The creative direction was driven by deep listening and a shared love for storytelling," Keisha Leon said.

"From a cultural perspective, this work is about preserving knowledge and keeping storytelling and language alive."

Keisha also developed a new slogan – *Be Part Of The Story* – to complement ILF's existing tagline *Reading Opens Doors*.

This new message invites both remote community members and broader supporters to engage with ILF's journey: as participants, partners, storytellers, fundraisers, or advocates for the importance of books in First Languages.

Also, at the heart of the rebrand are three First Nations artists – Mangarrayi artist Wanirr Keighran, Rose (Deborah Archie), and Ruby (Rusinya Brooks), all of whom have been engaged through ILF's Community Publishing and Talent Pathways programs.

Their artworks, inspired by their cultures and personal stories, now form a key part of ILF's visual identity and upcoming merchandise.

"I'm happy to be part of ILF's rebrand, it's an exciting opportunity," said Wanirr, whose artwork reflects her deep connection to Country.

Her artwork has been applied to new ILF shirts.

Rose, a 23-year-old artist from Bulla in the Northern Territory, says being part of the rebrand makes her feel proud.

"I want to make my own art and stories and share it with the world," she says.

Rose's artwork features in the first wave of merchandise and will be woven into more brand elements throughout the year.

Ruby, 21, from Milikapiti on

Melville Island, has grown up participating in ILF programs including the Pamela Lofts Bequest, Create and is now a participant in the first year of the Talent Pathways program.

"It's not about the destination, but the journey," says Ruby.

Her artwork will be featured on merchandise released later this year.

"The launch of ILF's new brand marks an incredible milestone—one that's been years in the making," ILF's Marketing Manager Emma Toomey, a Wiradjuri/Wongaibon woman.

"It's the result of thoughtful planning, collaboration, and a shared vision, and we couldn't be more proud of what we've achieved," Toomey said.



Reading Opens Doors.



# Cairns art fair returns to its spiritual home



THE Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) has made a triumphant return to its "spiritual home" adjacent to the city's botanic gardens at the Tanks Art Centre under the hand of new artistic director Teho Ropeyarn and the theme of *Pay Attention!*.

CIAF 2025 opened from Friday 11 through until Sunday 13 July, transforming the three heritage-listed, repurposed World War II oil tanks into a powerful hub of visual and performing arts, fashion, talks and cultural exchange.

CIAF Chair Bianca Beetson said the return to Tanks Arts Centre was a symbolic and strategic move.

"In 2025, CIAF comes full circle – returning to the site of its earliest beginnings to present a bold new program shaped by our next generation of First Nations voices," she said.

"This year's theme, *Pay Attention!*, invited festivalgoers to listen deeply, reflect honestly,



Yidinji Dancers were popular at CIAF 2025. Pictures: Lewis Bin Doraho

and engage fully with the stories being shared – it's a program that honours legacy while looking fearlessly to the future."

More than 400 artists and performers drew thousands of locals and visitors to a dynamic and multidimensional program, which included the CIAF Kids space, a new Mark Makers keynote Talks Program, roving exhibitor talks, tours,

Masterclasses and the powerful Look & Listen fashion performances.

"CIAF has always been a platform for truth-telling and celebration," Mr Ropeyarn said.

"This year's theme, *Pay Attention!*, invited us to go deeper – and the response from the public, artists and community has been phenomenal."

Inspired by Tony Albert's 2011

print, *Pay Attention!*, was a call to action which urged artists, audiences, and institutions to reckon with the truth, amplify First Nations voices and shape the future of contemporary storytelling across all art forms.

"*Pay Attention!* is a creative call to remain vigilant, honour our histories, and assert our presence as we shape the future," he said.

## Program highlights

- **Opening Night Celebration:** Welcome to Country, curated digital projections, cultural dance, live music, traditional food and the official opening of the Art Fair and Artisans Showcase, hosted by Sean Choolburra and Tania Major.

- **Art Fair Showcase:** more than 30 exhibitors, including art centres, commercial galleries, not-for-profits and independent artists.

- **Artisans Showcase:** more than 30 First Nations artisans presented handcrafted jewellery, ceramics, textiles and fashion in two open-air pavilions.

- **Look & Listen Fashion Performances:** Four distinctive shows across two days, celebrated wearable art by leading and emerging First Nations designers.

- **CIAF Art Awards Ceremony:** featured the Premier's Award for Excellence and People's Choice Award

- **Mark Makers Talks Program:** curated by Jack Wilkie-Jans with speakers including Dr Archie Moore, Dr Terri Janke and Sebastian Goldspink.

- **Masterclasses:** hands-on workshops led by acclaimed artists such as Helena Loncaric, Samala Thakiale Cronin, Nephi Denham, Kerry Klimm and Matilda Nona.

- **Cultural Art Demonstrations:** featured live artmaking by master artist Alick Tipoti.

- **Cultural Practices Dance Program:** celebrated intergenerational storytelling and cultural identity through traditional and contemporary performance.

- **Closing Ceremony:** featured final dance performances, the People's Choice Award presentation and a cultural procession to conclude the festival.



2025 CIAF staff, workers and volunteers. Picture: Lewis Bin Doraho



Aven Noah Jr, Dr Jessica Clar, Syd Bruce Shortjoe, Janina Harding, Lex Namponen and Daniel Dow.



Alick Tipoti and the Dhamuw Koedal dancers.



Members of the R.3.B hip-hop crew enjoy the support following their opening night performance.



## Foundation Studies Program (Indigenous) Yitpi Yartapuultiku

### Start your journey into tertiary education with the 20-week Foundation Studies Program (Indigenous).

Not everyone steps straight from school into university, and not everyone takes the same pathway to study.

In partnership with the newly developed Yitpi Yartapuultiku Aboriginal Cultural Destination, we have developed a 20-week university preparation program.

Located in the heart of Port Adelaide, this culturally inclusive program aims to connect members of the Community with the core skills required to succeed at university.

Successful completion of the program guarantees entry into one of over 30 degrees at Flinders.

#### Key information about this program:

- Classes run weekly over a 20-week period and are held in-person at the Yitpi Yartapuultiku centre in Port Adelaide.
- Enrolment is limited to students who are able to provide Confirmation of Aboriginality\*
- Class sizes are limited to ensure all students receive one-on-one support with their studies.



### Classes start July 2025

To express your interest in applying, please scan the QR code below and complete the form.

A member of our team will be in contact shortly with further information on admission and enrolment requirements\*.

\*Further details on Confirmation of Aboriginality can be found in this form



Discover More



# Stunning showcase of talent



Model Shamaiah Sullivan was the centre of attention with festival goers after walking the runway wearing garments from Irene Robinson and Darlene Fell's 2 Sista's Strong collection to open the 'Look' show.



AMID the industrial pillars and heritage charm of Tanks Arts Centre's Tank 5, the CIAF 2025 fashion performance Look &

Listen made its debut, transforming the historic space into a runway of resistance, expression and unapologetic cultural pride.

With two parts – Look and Listen – and one unified story, the performance brought together twelve First Nations designers, 16 models, and a powerful creative team to reflect the 2025 curatorial theme, Pay Attention!

The Look segment foregrounded design, colour, and identity, offering a parade of wearable artworks from the likes of the sisterly duo Irene Robinson and Darlene Fell, Sandra and Shara Delaney, Robert Tommy Pau and the Hope Vale Arts Centre, among others.

The transition to Listen signalled an energy shift.

The fashion remained central, but here the garments were interwoven with spoken word, music, and live performance.

Cairns-based hip-hop crew R.3.B

brought the house down with a blistering, rhythmic live set that echoed the heartbeat of community and defiance.

Their presence elevated the show from a catwalk to a concert to a cultural event.

Mr Ropeyarn said the vision for Look & Listen was to push the boundaries of what fashion could be.

"This is more than design – it's about visual sovereignty," he said.

"We're asserting our presence on our terms."

"Through textile, movement, music and voice, we are speaking directly to our communities – and to those who need to hear us."

The production was directed and curated by CIAF's Fashion Coordinator Lynelle Flinders, who emphasised Look & Listen was as much a cultural statement as it was a creative showcase.

"There's a reason we called it Look & Listen – we want audiences to slow down, engage, and absorb," she said.

"Everything you see on stage has meaning. It's woven with story and strength."



Model Gillyba Ambrum wearing designs from Kuku Bulkaway & Yuku Baja Muliku Artists. Pictures: Lewis Bin Doraho



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#ChangingLivesKeepingCulture



The outside of one of the tanks on display at the launch of one of the two fashion shows.





CIAF 2025 Art Awards Innovation winner Alick Tipoti.



CIAF 2025 Art Awards Art Centre winner Hope Vale Art and Culture Centre.

# Excellence recognised with awards



THE 2025 Cairns Indigenous Art Fair (CIAF) Art Awards recognised excellence across Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander visual arts sector.

This year's top honour, the Premier's Award for Excellence, was awarded to Djabugay/Yirrgay artist Bernard Singleton (Yakal Creatives) for his commanding wood carving *Offering (2025)*, a work praised by judges for its technical mastery, cultural grounding, and robust response to CIAF's theme Pay Attention!.

The judges said they found *Offering (2025)* to "demonstrate a mastery in traditional carving technique, producing an arresting and commanding work that audiences pay attention to".

"The piece is rooted in Djabugay/Yirrgay knowledge, which speaks to Singleton's upbringing and inter-generational storytelling," they said.

"The work highlights reciprocal responsibility and the crucial role that relationships play in caring for Country, for one another, our futures, and both the tangible and intangible aspects of the world.

"The Hairy Men (known by many names) have a presence across Singleton's and Tropical North Queensland's forests as protectors of Country, their associated and diverse Lore also connects knowledge from across First Nations Australia and globally.

"Through techniques rooted in both traditional and contemporary experimentation, Singleton embodies CIAF's 2025 theme, Pay Attention!:

Truth-telling through creativity.

"Singleton's contribution stands as both protest and invitation – urging people to pay attention to what is often unseen and unheard and to challenge them to reckon with the legacies and futures of Indigenous Sovereignty."

This year's Peoples' Choice award went to Dylan Sarra for his work *'Native Police Spears'*.

The collection of glass-tipped spears referenced the Queensland Native Police, which were established to carry out the expansion of colonial settlement across the state in the late 1800s.

The glass and stone-tipped spears represented cultural continuity, collective identity, and resistance rooted in Country.

"These spears assert presence and survival," Mr Sarra said.

"They are not weapons of conquest but markers of belonging.

"My work is about connecting to ancestral voices still embedded in place.

"By carving and creating, I am continuing a legacy interrupted by colonisation—one that carries strength, knowledge, and survival.

"This is not the whole story.

"Instead, it is the beginning."

Mr Ropeyarn said the work embodied this year's CIAF theme, Pay Attention!

Badu artist Alick Tipoti was awarded the Innovation Award for *Mawaw Danaka*, recognised by judges for its experimental approach, cultural depth and outstanding technical achievement, but beyond the awards, Alick was a central figure in CIAF's 2025 program, presenting work across multiple platforms and performances.



CIAF 2025 Art Awards Premier's Award for Excellence winner Bernard Singleton.



CIAF 2025 People's Choice Award winner Dylan Sarra (right) with Torres Strait Regional Authority chairperson George Nona.

## Winners

**Premier's Award for Excellence**  
**Bernard Singleton (Yakal Creatives),**  
***Offering (2025)***

**Art Centre Award**  
**Hopevale Arts & Culture Centre**  
**Innovation Award**

**Alick Tipoti, *Mawaw Danaka (2025)***

**3D Design, Sculpture and Installation Award**

**Kyra Mancktelow (awarded for full body of work, represented by N. Smith Gallery)**

**Emerging Art Award (Acquisitive)**

**Roy Gray (Bunda Art) for *Syriacarpia***

***Gloulifera (Turpentine/Gulumbi) (2025)*, Please note that this work has been created in collaboration with Jo Ann Beikoff 'Milba'.**

**Peoples' Choice**

**Dylan Sarra (Mitchell Fine Art Gallery), *Native Police Spears***

**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 decommissioning of platforms and pipelines in Bass Strait, the Esso Consultation Team will be hosting community information sessions at the following locations:

#### Monday 11 August 2025 - Lakes Entrance

On the Wharf Café  
Bullock Island, Lakes Entrance

#### Tuesday 12 August 2025 - Yarram

The Yarram Country Club  
322-340 Commercial Road, Yarram

#### Wednesday 13 August 2025 - Sale

The Criterion Hotel  
90 Macalister Street, Sale

#### Monday 18 August 2025 - Yanakie

Yanakie Hall  
Millar Road, Yanakie

#### Tuesday 19 August 2025 - Foster

Foster War Memorial Arts Centre  
79 Main Street, Foster

#### Wednesday 20 August 2025 - Leongatha

Leongatha RSL  
Cnr Smith St & Michael Pl, Leongatha

All the above sessions will run from **5.00pm - 7.00pm** with a **presentation** about Esso's operations, focusing on decommissioning projects.

We encourage you to come along and ask questions or 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 proposed activities, including:

- Bass Strait Environment Plans
- Barracouta Plug and Abandonment Environment Plan
- Campaign 1A Environment Plan

### 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 \(sli.do\)](#) 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 \(nopsema.gov.au\)](#) 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>



# Q&A with Aunty Markeesh De Busch



Jack Wilkie-Jans

**M**y Aunty, Markeesh De Busch (also known as Grunning), was one of my favourite aunts growing up. Today, she's a businesswoman, cultural and political commentator, and is taking newsfeeds by storm with her satire! She's a woman of faith, of Samoan, Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait Islander) and Aboriginal heritage. She's a woman of the times – ahead, in many respects – who encourages us all to examine who we are and what we think.

A woman of many talents and interests and much advocacy, she's beaten me (and most) to the TikTok punch – as one of the platform's most visceral and relational figures. I don't have the app, but I do see her work across other platforms she shares (findable on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube as Grunning, as well as on various podcast platforms).

**Q.** It'd be fair to say you're political, but I'd broaden that to you fundamentally being more philosophical in your outlook(s). What's the biggest issue – philosophical, political, cultural, or spiritual – that you can name is facing our peoples today?

**A.** It's not just politics – it's spiritual warfare, straight-up. Every day we wake up in a world still tryna erase us, then turn around and sell our culture back to

us on a tote bag. We're out here raising kids, healing generational trauma, coping racism, getting side-eyed in shops – and still expected to 'be grateful.' Meanwhile the entertainment industry out here snatching our lingo, our humour, our pain – turning it into punchlines for their social media platforms. They wanna act Black, joke Black, profit Black – but they don't wanna live Black. That's why I use comedy and merch like a shield and a weapon. I turn survival into style. I don't play the respectability game – I speak truth, laugh loud, and make sure mob see themselves, not just survive. We don't need permission. We're already powerful – they just jealousing, bub.

**Q.** Your content is hilarious – you take the mickey big time, but are always pertinent and poignant in message. Tell us about the importance of humour, and the healing power of laughter.

**A.** I was born into trauma. Didn't choose it – but here it is, passed down like the good cutlery we never used. My Dad? Funniest fulla I knew. Carrying grief like an old swag, still had the whole family laughing. Our house was one big contradiction – crying in one room, cackling in the other. Got flogged? We laugh now. Not 'cause it was right, but because healing sometimes comes with a snort-laugh and an [eye-roll]. After a funeral? We're not just mourning – we're mocking Uncle for dancing off-beat or Nan for being extra. Mob in jail still got jokes. That's how deep our funny bone goes. Whitefellas don't get it: 'Why do they laugh at everything?' Because our laughter is spiritual. It's sacred. It don't just come from the belly – it comes from the ancestors. From the bush. From all the pain we didn't let kill us. African Americans sang in chains. Us mob? We laugh in 'em. Still do. Even if those chains now look like poverty, court cases, or postcode profiling. We don't laugh 'cause it's funny. We laugh 'cause we remember. Because every

laugh is resistance. Every giggle is a ceremony. Every roast is a revival. Don't worry if you don't get it. This laughter wasn't meant for you. It's for us. And it's keeping us alive – until the next arrest, or the next roast.

**Q.** You're a constructive critic of much of modern Indigeneity (if that's even a word you'd reconcile with). What's your take on 'identity' today and how it's expressed and internalised as blakfellas?

**A.** The more we 'progress,' the harder it's becoming to control Indigenous thought – our behaviour, our spirit, our very being. What we're seeing isn't just cultural revival – it's spiritual resistance. It feels like the Stolen Generation's legacy has turned into a political conquest of 'coming home.' Yes, we want our mob to reconnect, feel Country, hear the ancestors – but where's the line in the sand? Because now we've got governments and NGOs slapping our culture on T-shirts and banners like it's branding – while mob still struggle for land back, water, housing, and justice. In Mount Isa, you'll see workers wear Black, but ignore Black; who's that really serving? When we see art, we see identity, straight up we know that's Mob, nek minute, it's a worker with no cultural awareness. Feels like we're heading into a melting pot of art, not identity. Real identity is barefoot on red dirt. It's ancestors calling us home, not emails or funding rounds. Culture isn't in a uniform or a logo. It's in our spirits. It's in the stories, the silence, the soil.

Read *Koori Mail's* next issue for Part II of my Q&A with Aunty Markeesh De Busch.

● Jack Wilkie-Jans is a Waanji, Teppathiggi and Tjungundji multidisciplinary artist and regular arts columnist for the *Koori Mail*, arts worker, writer, and arts-policy theorist.



Markeesh De Busch.

# Tessa delights in proper role

By MARION WILLIAMS



ACTRESS Tessa Rose has had more than her fair share of troubles in life. Perhaps that's why she can deliver such powerful performances as the 15-minute drama *Bear* that is a finalist in the Far South Film Festival.

The Ngangiwumerrri woman was taken away but now lives on Larrakia Country. Ms Rose grew up in Perth with different foster families. She returned to Darwin when she was 15 years old.

## Dancer to actress

Her performance career started as a dancer. Ms Rose studied for a four-year diploma with the National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association. In her final year she went to Sydney's Bangarra Dance Theatre and became part of Stephen Page's production *Fish*.

While at Bangarra she did a workshop with guest tutor Noel Tovey.

"He said you should be an actor and invited me to perform Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*," Ms Rose said.

Mr Tovey fought for her to play



Tessa Rose in the lead role of the 15-minute drama *Bear*. Picture: Supplied.

the roles of Titania and Hippolyta in the Sydney Theatre Company's Shakespearian production. It was part of the Festival of the Dreaming, the first of four Olympic Arts Festivals ahead of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

Mr Page said when she graduated, she was welcome at Bangarra but advised to pursue acting.

Ms Rose successfully auditioned for a position at Sydney Theatre Company and worked with Wesley Enoch for the next six years.

The main character of *Bear*,

Bev, wasn't written to be Indigenous.

After Ms Rose auditioned for the part, "they rang me up and said now we must find an Indigenous daughter for you. It was fortunate that Rarriwuy Hick was around at the same time, and they got her."

In *Bear* Bev goes to the vet to have her beloved dog put down because it had attacked her grandchildren. In the waiting room there is a woman who Bev knows from her past. The woman had helped Bev to escape from an abusive relationship.

On her first read Ms Rose connected with the part because she has two dogs of her own. As she became familiar with the script and read the director's notes, things really started clicking. Ms Rose is a survivor of domestic violence.

"Even though it was years ago, and I had five years of recovery, in the scene with me running down the street at night after being hit by a hammer I didn't have to act," Ms Rose said.

"It conjured it all up. Between takes I had my own crying and then had to do the next take."

Another intense scene is in the vet's clinic, watching the needle go into the dog, and him die.

"That was a long struggling day in that small room," Ms Rose said. "I had to keep doing it and have the same intensity every time. Watching that needle go in was really hard."

## Generic roles

All Ms Rose's work has been down south.

Even in the last two years while there have been several movies and shows made on Larrakia Country with roles for Indigenous extras, none have had main roles for Indigenous actors. Ms Rose is now heading down a different career path.

"I tried to give up acting so many times, but it is like an artist without a canvas," she said. "It has been my life but now I am able to be happy to let it go."

Bev's character strongly appealed to Ms Rose because it was a proper role, not the generic Aboriginal Aunty or Nanna roles she'd been cast her entire career.

"This needs to be celebrated as casting in our country needs to be addressed," Ms Rose said. "The wealth of old, young, and upcoming actors and actresses is outstanding."



# The Deans of Soul: *Peace, pride and joy*

By ALI MC



FIRST Nations big-band soul outfit the Deans of Soul have recently released a new album, titled *Peace, Pride and Joy*.

Led by singer, songwriter and guitarist Linc Yow Yeh, a South Sea Islander Murri man of Goreng Goreng/Gunja heritage, the band has a career spanning two decades including multiple recordings, pub gigs and festival performances.

Brad Boon, Kurnai drummer, reflects on the early days of the band when Fitzroy was a thriving hub of the Aboriginal community in Melbourne.

He recalls how Yow Yeh had recently moved down from Cape York and found himself on a gig at the Dan O'Connell Hotel with Uncle Archie Roach and Auntie Ruby Hunter.

"I don't know how Linc got the gig, but all I know is that he borrowed Auntie Ruby's guitar to play it," Boon reminisces. "The Koori flag guitar, that was the guitar he used."

For decades, Fitzroy was the urban centre for Mob in Victoria, until gentrification subsumed the suburb in the mid-2000s.

This included a flourishing live music scene where now-legendary bands such as No Fixed Address and Black Fire cut their teeth.

"The Dan O'Connell was one of the original pubs – it just used to rock," Boon says. "We played our very first gig there in 2003."

"That was when all the organisations used to be in that area. VAEAI was on the corner of Gertrude and Brunswick, the Legal Service on Alexander Parade, the Health Service on Gertrude Street. The Fitzroy Stars gym was running and VACSAL was in Smith Street," he recalls.

It was from this flourishing environment the Deans of Soul would emerge, with a musical emphasis less on strident politics and more on life, love and family.

Yow Yeh told the *Koori Mail* that while he is inspired by legendary songwriters and storytellers such as Joe Geia

and Bart Willoughby, his approach to songwriting is more subtle.

"I don't consider myself a storyteller, but listening to them provided me with a licence to just tell your own story in your own way," he says.

"I write in textures and sounds, maybe a comment or a statement somebody has made, they might hear in the wind, throw it in a song. Other times it might be a bit more personal about my own family, Boony's family, his connections to his Mob, because we're the two Aboriginal artists in the band."

Yow Yeh cites his musical influences stemming very much from the catalogue of Black American soul artists: Sam Cooke, Marvin Gaye, Bobby Womack and Jimi Hendrix.

**"We're a pretty resilient mob. With everything that's happened to us in the past, present and the future, we still get up and engage with non-Aboriginal people in this country, especially white fellas."**

It was these influences that inspired him to form the Deans of Soul, primarily based around the trio of himself, Brad Boon on drums and Nick Larkins on bass. However, the band swells to a nine-piece with horns, keys and backing vocals, especially for the big festivals.

"It's great for me behind the drum kit, watching people get up and dance," Boon says of the band's live experience. "If we can send folk off who are happy, and feel good about themselves, we're doing our job. If we can put a bit of happiness and joy in their lives in this current climate, it's a win for everyone."

Yet even with a predominantly feel-good and inclusive approach to their music, the Deans of Soul still cop racism for being unashamedly Aboriginal.

During the lead up to the

referendum in 2023, the band were advertising their appearance at a First Nations show at the Retreat Hotel in Melbourne, only to have an onslaught of racist comments on their Facebook page.

"They were folk that were triggered by a hashtag of Indigenous, First Nations, Aboriginal music," Boon reflects.

"No mention of the referendum, the yes vote, or anything like that – and then to be attacked. It showed us that we've still got a long way to go in this country."

He says that as both Aboriginal community members and family men, he and Yow Yeh continue to remain positive role models.

"We're a pretty resilient Mob.

With everything that's happened to us in the past, present and the future, we still get up and engage with non-Aboriginal people in this country, especially white fellas," he says.

"However, it's hard, because for us, as parents, me and Linc have got kids and it's stressful for us knowing that our kids are going out into that world and what they're going to experience."

The new album, titled *Peace, Pride and Joy*, features eight new tracks, one with the legendary Mutti Mutti songman

Uncle Kutcha Edwards.

"He's doing a vocal on it. You can hear him all the way through it's got his quintessential touch and spirit through the song," singer/songwriter Yow Yeh tells the *Koori Mail*. "We're very blessed and honoured to have big fella on the track."

Along with being available in digital format, the new album will also be available on 12-inch vinyl. Yow Yeh encourages people to get to a Deans of Soul show, especially if they want to grab one of the limited-edition vinyl albums.

"It's limited copies, so if you want a copy, get to a gig," he says.

The Deans of Soul: *Peace, Pride and Joy* is released on vinyl, digital and CD formats, and can be purchased via the band's Facebook page and at live gigs.



The Deans of Soul: Nick Larkins, bass, Linc Yow Yeh, guitar and vocals, and Brad Boon, drums.

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# Ways of the Warlpiri

First contact Elder  
Warlpiri Songman Jerry



**CROWN and Country**, an immersive new First Nations audio visual project that encompasses music and film, will get its premiere on 1 August at Darwin Festival's opening weekend followed by a community screening in Lajamanu, NT and a film screening and artist talk at Now or Never Festival in Melbourne.

Already released is the first single from the project, *'WANTARRI (GIFT)'* which is also the name of Warlpiri Elder, Wantarri Jampijinpa Pawu-Kurlpurlurnu, known as Wanta Jampijinpa.

Wanta Jampijinpa is the director of *Crown and Country*, a project resulting from more than a decade of creative collaboration that will generously share profound Warlpiri knowledge with a wider Australian and international audience.

Wanta Jampijinpa joins his father, first contact Elder and one of the most important Warlpiri Songmen alive today, Jerry Jangala Patrick OAM, whose traditional singing grounds the work in Warlpiri ceremony.

Through this project Wanta Jampijinpa invites viewers to experience the heat and vastness of the desert and to glimpse the depths of the Warlpiri cosmological world view.

Together the father and son invite people to form a new relationship with Country through a deeper understanding of the land and First Nations knowledge.

The music for *WANTARRI (GIFT)* is composed by longtime collaborator Marc 'Monkey' Peckham, currently based in Lajamanu, Northern Territory.

Wanta Jampijinpa, Jerry Jangala and Monkey have already shared a remarkable creative relationship spanning 14 years in Lajamanu, working on the innovative community-based Milpirri Festival.

Artist and project co-director Wantarri 'Wanta' Jampijinpa Pawu-Kurlpurlurnu is a fully initiated Warlpiri Elder holding rare and exceptional knowledge of Warlpiri law and culture in the

Tanami Desert. His first language is Warlpiri.

He is the son of Warlpiri Elder Jerry Jangala Patrick.

He graduated from the Warlpiri sky ceremonies in the 1980s and was admitted to the highest order of traditional learning by Warlpiri Elders in 2008, giving him the responsibility to look after his father's and his mother's father's songlines.

In addition to being the custodian of these ceremonies and Country, Wanta Jampijinpa is the guardian of his father's mother's and mother's mother's songlines.

Wanta Jampijinpa's homeland is Pawu (Mt Barkley) and he also has the responsibility to look after the remote Dreaming waterhole and plain known as Kurlpurlurnu (Rain Dreaming).

He has co-directed numerous films including *'Milpirri: Winds of Change'* (2014) and *'Ngapa Jukurrpa – Water Songline'* (2016), which screens on SBS On Demand.

Wanta Jampijinpa was a Research Fellow at Australian National University, and holds long-term research collaborations with colleagues at the University of Melbourne and UNSW, and was a Professor of the Indigenous Knowledge Institute, The University of Melbourne, from 2022-24.

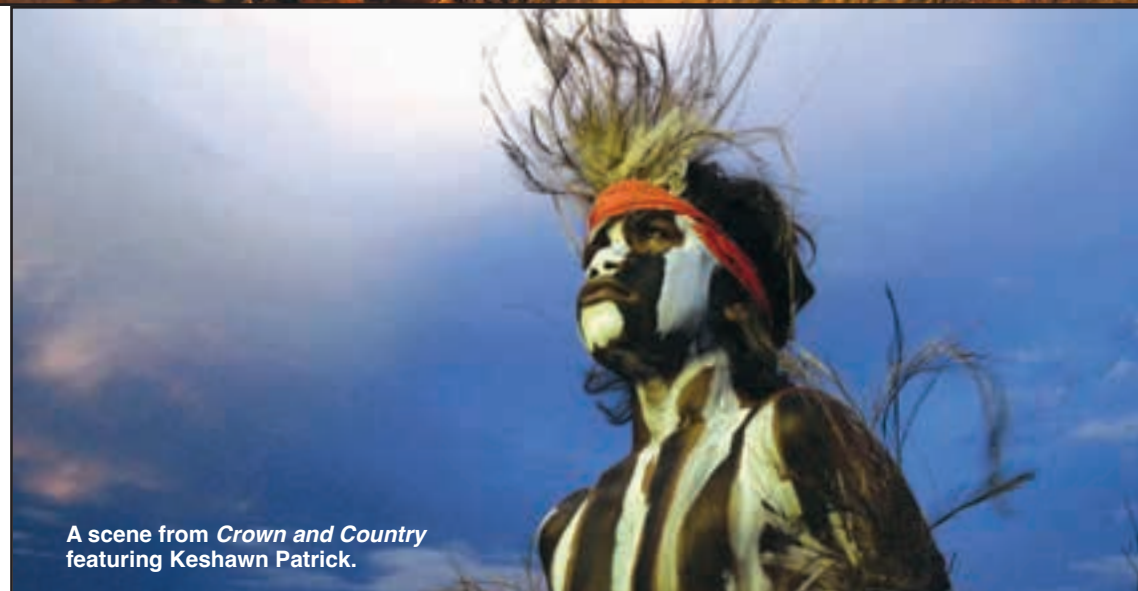
As a musician Wanta Jampijinpa was a touring member of the influential North Tanami Band in the 2000s.

Artist Jerry Jangala Patrick OAM is Wanta's father and one of the most senior Warlpiri Elders in the desert and one of the last Elders who remember their first contact with white Australia.

He was born in the 1930s at Lirrapuntji, north of the Warlpiri community of Willowra. He grew up in the desert in the traditional way, meeting a party of white people for the first time in the mid-1940s including renowned botanist and anthropologist Olive Pink.

When the government began to resettle people from Yuendumu, Jerry Jangala's family walked across the Tanami Desert to Willowra and then Yuendumu in the 1940s.

Jerry Jangala made the



A scene from *Crown and Country* featuring Keshawn Patrick.



*Crown and Country* director Wanta Jampijinpa.

journey on foot, while the government moved other people by truck. He came to the new settlement of Hooker Creek (renamed Lajamanu in 1978) with his family around 1948, and worked for no wages building the airstrip and working as a drover at Waterloo station.

Jerry Jangala is now a highly respected teacher, pastor and one of the most senior Warlpiri lawmen still living. He has been closely involved with numerous academics where his knowledge has helped promote an understanding of Warlpiri culture.

Jerry Jangala is one of the keystone Elders of the award-winning Milpirri Festival, a founding member of the Kurdiji Law and Justice Committee

which works in Lajamanu alongside the Australian legal system, and the key Elder for the Warlpiri ranger program. He received an Order of Australia for his enormous work on translating the Bible into the Warlpiri language.

Composer and project co-director Marc 'Monkey' Peckham is an award-winning music producer with music released in Europe, USA and Australia. He has performed at the world's biggest festivals including Glastonbury, Boomtown and Symbiosis.

Monkey's second home is the desert, and he has worked with First Nations communities on music and culture projects for more than 25 years, to

strengthen, preserve and reinvigorate First Nations knowledge and amplify First Nations voices.

He pioneered Transfer of Knowledge projects in the early 2000s, which transform traditional Dreamtime stories into modern songs through youth music workshops.

In 2015, his work facilitating the three-year Barkly Desert Culture program, won a National Local Government Award in the 'Arts Animates' category, for which he mentored First Nations youth in hip-hop music and produced a number of hip-hop acts he toured to Sand Tracks and multiple festivals, winning a NIMA for best community film clip in 2014.



# Colonial classic revamped

By CHRISTIAN MORROW



ABORIGINAL gothic horror will this way come when *The Chosen Vessel*, a dramatic re-telling of Barbara

Beynton's 1896 classic *The Tramp* comes to the Street Theatre Company in Canberra from 8-24 August.

Adapted by Palawa playwright Dylan Van Den Berg this re-imagining of the Australian classic explores the isolation and oppression experienced by women in the Australian bush in the 19th century.

Mr Van Den Berg sets out to 're-truth' the past and carve out a meaningful place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the narrative by placing a black body in a white story, and expanding the colonial world to show the ways colonial violence was/is enacted.

He aligns his adaptation with the original story in its portrayal of the reality isolated women faced at that time. In his version a young Aboriginal woman, made a mother against her will, lives in the bush. One day a white swagman arrives, asking for food and water, and her fears about the 'white' ghosts who occupy the land begin to take hold.

The play depicts her relationships with various white men: the swagman who took her life; the boy she grew up with – separated by race and class; the man who became her 'husband' in name only; and the oblivious horseman who discovers her and the child by a river.

"I'm thrilled to be premiering *The Chosen Vessel* on Ngannawal and Ngambri Country. This story was incubated here, tested creatively here and it feels only right that it is fully realised here, too," said Mr Van Den Berg.

Directed by Kalkadoon woman Abbie-lee Lewis and starring Torres Strait Islander (Meriam/Wagadagam) and Indian (Rattlamwali) actor Laila Thaker and award-winning Australian actor Craig Alexander, *The Chosen Vessel* invites audiences to reflect on what we chose to see – and what we wilfully ignore.

Ahead of the opening night the *Koori Mail* was lucky enough to speak with Mr Van Den Berg to



Stars of *The Chosen Vessel* Craig Alexander as the swagman and Laila Thaker as The Woman. PHOTO: Novel Photographic.

learn more about the Aboriginal Gothic genre and *The Chosen Vessel*.

**KM:** How do you understand the idea of a Gothic story? What makes the Gothic genre sort so suitable for re-focusing narrative around Indigenous perspectives?

**DVDB:** This links up with my PhD in Aboriginal Gothic which explores the way Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have commandeered the genre of the Gothic. The Australian Gothic is about the landscape being terrifying but of course for Blackfullas it's not the landscape that's terrifying it's the whitefellas who began to populate it, that began to change the nature of that landscape.

Gothic is also about history, the present and the future colliding which links a lot of stories that I knew growing up from my great-grandmother. The way the Gothic handles time and the way it's about hauntings of place lends itself to the Indigenous lens through which we see this particular story, which is about a woman isolated in the bush, with a baby who is visited by a swagman which results in an act of violence against her. In my retelling I also have a ghost or a spirit character who is able to narrate and give a voice to that



*The Chosen Vessel* director Abbie-lee Lewis and playwright Dylan Van Den Berg. PHOTO: Nathan Smith Photography.

woman and say the things she was never able to say in life.

**KM:** In the play you refocus the story to be told from different angles. One angle is the Indigenous point of view, but are there other angles you're talking about?

**DVDB:** Yes, not only do we look at it through that black lens but also through a gendered lens as well. The original story that I'm basing the play on (*The Tramp*) was itself a response to *The Drover's Wife*, by Henry Lawson, but this is a more feminist response to the realities of being a woman in the bush. So I wanted to write a play about the realities of being a black woman in the bush and the things that might have emerged. So these are the two main angles which we're

coming at the story.

**KM:** In terms of staging the play, are there any devices you use to achieve the Gothic-ness of the story? Gothic often brings to mind an elaborately staged piece, with sleight-of-hand and sliding doors and people appearing and disappearing.

**DVDB:** These are the elements we are trying to figure out, just how to achieve these things and put our own spin on it. Our amazing director Abby Lee Lewis has developed a way that characters can appear and disappear pretty quickly on stage. We are also playing with shadow and what an audience can or can't see from moment to moment which is about creating a sense of ambiguity around events that are happening. Lights and sounds are

really playing a huge part in building suspense and kind of trying to terrify the audience with the story we tell. There are a couple of different bits and pieces that we were using to create the Gothic feel – to keep things hidden or reveal things as we want the audience to see them.

**KM:** After the production you're hosting a Q&A about your PhD and the reclaiming of the Gothic for Indigenous storytelling. Is this session for other playwrights or audiences in general?

**DVDB:** Ideally it's for other writers, but I think there are some things with general audience appeal around learning how First Nations artist are commandeering genre. There will be a bunch of writers who produce work in other genres on the panel so there's going to be more of a general chat around the way we've been able to transition from genres that have a real European or Western grounding to explore how we can twist them and fit them into the way that Indigenous people want to tell stories.

We have a writer who works in the Noir genre which we call Koori Noir and another who works in the fantasy genre in Western sense. I'm increasingly seeing Indigenous writers using those frameworks to tell very potent stories about our histories and our lived experiences.

**KM:** In terms of mainstream producers in theatre, film and television, are they receptive to the way you've reclaimed these genres and stories?

**DVDB:** I've definitely seen that emerging over the last couple of years. I've tried to identify the Aboriginal Gothic over the last 10-15 years and there are some plays that I've been able to see that in. So I believe there is an appetite from production companies in theatre and screen for the Gothic style. Even in the time that I've been working on my PhD I've been approached to write a number of plays in the Aboriginal Gothic style. So I feel like this there's an emerging acceptance and emerging interest in the use of genre in the telling of Black stories.

There will be a post-show Q&A with cast and creatives on 13 August following the performance. For tickets and information go to: [www.thestreet.org.au](http://www.thestreet.org.au)

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# Prestigious awards showcase First Nations' top creatives



THE TELSTRA National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award (NATSIAA) winners will be announced in Garramilla (Darwin) in just one week. In the meantime *The Koori Mail* presents the work of some of the finalists from across the country.

With prize money totalling \$190,000, including the \$100,000 Telstra Art Award, the NATSIAAs are Australia's longest running and most prestigious Aboriginal art award and the most important showcase of First Nations art presented annually.

Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) Director, Adam Worrall said

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art is a vital part of the social and cultural life of Australia.

"This year's Telstra NATSIAA presents 71 exceptional works, selected from over 200 entries, providing a snapshot of the finest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art created in the past year," he said. "The continued support of Telstra is essential to ensuring these stories are seen, shared and celebrated."

The exhibition will be on display at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory in Garramilla until to 26 January 2026. *The Koori Mail* will feature extensive coverage of the event and the winners in our next issue due out on August 13.

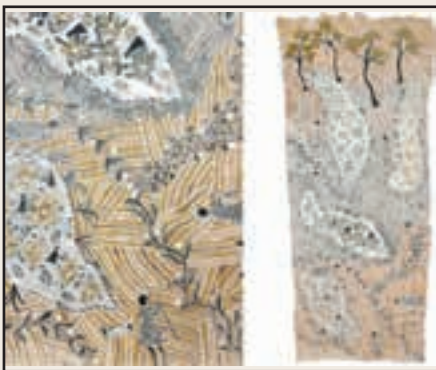
## Northern Territory

**Yalmakany Marawili** – Yolngu matha language, lives Yirrkala, NT.

**Gulun nathamirri – bountiful billabong 2025**

This work depicts women harvesting Ganay' (Ipomoea graminea), yams, rakay (water

chestnut) and dindan (lily bulbs) sitting in a freshwater billabong surrounded by ranjan (paperbark) and the djakuḷulu – grey magnetic termite mounds. The pattern behind suggests a cool breeze blowing through the landscape.



**Sheree Inkamala** – Luritja, Pitjantjara, Western Arrarnta languages, lives Yarrenyty Arltene Town Camp, Alice Springs, NT.

**Those Dancing Birds! 2025**

"Those birds are dancing, flapping their wings, dancing to the music, feeling fun. They are all family and when you dance with

family, old way, culture way, and new way, it is good, fun, nice and beautiful."



**Charmaine Ashley** – Wagilak language, lives Gapuwiyak, NT.

**Namiliri Billabong 2025**

"When I made this, I was thinking about my mother's Country near Ngukurr. It's a

billabong with a big story. It's called Namiliri and has stories about Goanna, Duck and Barramundi. I love working with pandanus and bush dyes to make beautiful and colourful fibre art."

## ACT

**Jennifer Kemarre Martiniello** OAM – Irrwanyere Arrernte Imarnt / Lower Southern Arrernte languages, lives Canberra, ACT

**Painted Desert Continuous Creation Story 2024**

"I am showing the story about the Painted Desert in the far north of South Australia, which is visible from Hookey's Waterhole on the Nappamurra near Oodnadatta, where

my father was born. I have chosen hot-blown glass Rainbow Serpent eggs to evoke the traditional concept of continuous creation evident in the evolution of this sacred landscape over 80 million years. This continuum is mirrored in the repeating sequences of melting, layering, marvering and heating in the making process, so multiple overlays of mineral oxides and molten glass replicate the land markings and features of the Painted Desert."



## NSW

**Wanita Lowe** – Dunghutti-Biripi-Wiradjuri language, lives in Wollongong, NSW.

**Call of the Bilirr Bilirr (Black Cockatoo) 2025**

"Call of the Bilirr Bilirr is my story of being a ward of the state, growing up in my white

family foster home and enduring trauma and abuse. I was lost in not knowing my Aboriginal identity.

"I knew my parents but grew up off-Country. I am depicted as a white child, representing my fragile and innocent self only

knowing the white ways. The grey child is learning culture for the first time through dance. The black women represent my cultural journey standing strong and proud. The Ancestors spoke loudly through the call of the Bilirr Bilirr, calling me home."



**Virginia Keft Muruwari** – Muruwari language, lives in Dharawal Country, NSW.

**pinampi madjam guruwa dja (Remember the flying fox in the gum tree) 2025**

"I tread softly on the Country of my grandmother's birth. We turn in

a slow circle and sit at the meeting place. The guruwa (gum trees) sing and sway by the Barwon River. "Nuwa ganda, look up", says Aunty. My eyes follow. Madjam – flying fox – hang and wait for dusk. "Pinampi" says Aunty. It means listen and

remember. Our hands work the fibres. The river birds ready for night and the guruwa leaves under me have pressed and imprinted on my bare legs. The central motif of the flying fox symbolically references my connection to place, family and culture."



## Victoria

**Jack Anselmi** – Yorta Yorta language, lives in Mooroopna, Vic

**Yorta Yorta Bayadherra Woka (Yorta Yorta Long Neck Turtle Country) 2025**



"I still have strong memories of when I was a young man working with mum and others doing survey work on Yorta Yorta Country at Ulupna Island. I remember the beautiful matha biyala and koalas on the Dunghala riverbanks. I especially loved seeing our bayadherra totem swimming and diving down between the roots of the matha biyala growing into the Dunghala. For me, bayadherra and Yorta Yorta Country are very special.

For me, bayadherra represents who we are, our families, our Ancestors and Yorta Yorta Country. Yorta Yorta people and Country are still here and we always will be."





## South Australia

**Derek Jungarrayi Thompson** – Pitjantjatjara language, lives in Pukatja Community, APY Lands, SA.

### Atila 2025

“Atila is my uncle’s Country. That mountain got a lot of secret stories. Seven Sisters goes through there, but it’s a secret and I don’t tell it; it’s only for the old men. I’ve been there to see the Country and walk around it, but white people can’t go there, they can only take photos from the road. Atila or Mount Conner is located in Pitjantjatjara Country just north of the APY Lands. It is also known as ‘Fooluru’ as it often gets mistaken for Uluru.”



## Western Australia

### Jimmy Tjapangarti

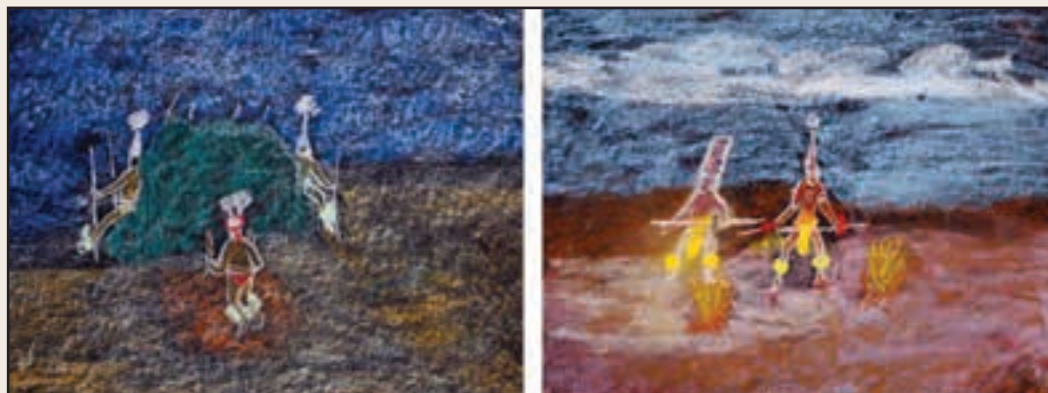
**Tchooga** – Warlpiri, Ngarti languages, lives Wirrimanu (Balgo Community), WA.

### Waringarri Songline and the Luurnpa (Kingfisher) 2025

“Now I’m the one. I’m the one that’s got that knowledge. I’m the one who passes it on. And I do. Every day.”

This suite of drawings is a response to the Birrundudu

Drawings, a historic collection of crayon-on-paper works created by Warlpiri and Gurindji men in the late 1940s. Jimmy Tjapangarti Tchooga’s drawings trace the Waringarri songline, a ceremony gifted to him by senior men before they passed away. Through these works, he shares the journey of Luurnpa (Kingfisher) and the men who revived this tradition.



**Ned Grant** – Pitjantjatjara language, lives Tjuntjuntjara, WA. **Yuwarn 2025**

Ned Grant has weaved the wata (roots) of the ngalta (desert kurrajong) atop linen to craft the site of Yuwarn. Ned drank from the site as a

nyyingka (segregated bush boy). He bends and weaves the wata to represent the Tjintir – Tjintirpa Tjukurpa (Willie Wagtail Creation Line) whose name is Yina, as she traverses the surrounding terrain, leaving behind the

drama in the physical realm. These sites were created by the first beings who shaped the landscape as they journeyed through it, leaving a moral narrative etched into the physical environment that is both religion and song.



## Queensland

**Naomi Hobson** – Southern Kaantju and Umpila languages, Lives in Coen, Cape York, Qld.

### Present & Beyond 2024

“Present & Beyond is a new work in my photographic series Life on the River. The work shows a young local boy from Coen. He is confident within himself and secure in the knowledge that his present and his future are intertwined in the deep past where others before him walked and rested in safety. I am fixated on the reflections that our Ancestors occupied this very space and am amazed at how far we have come in sharing space over time. I am capturing time and a history where images begin to travel between the past, the present, and beyond.”



**Elisa Jane Carmichael** – Ngugi, Quandamooka language, lives in Brisbane, Qld.

### Threads that bind us 2024

“Strings flow into adornments worn on the body, strung from shoulder to shoulder, holding memories of Country, ceremony and spirit, strengthening the continuous thread that binds us to our Ancestors. Cyanotype solutions are

painted and soaked into shells and developed using sunshine, creating embodiments of water, mirroring clouds as the fish scales glisten like strings of shooting stars connecting the seas to Ancestral skies.

“In keeping with the seasons, fibres including talwalpin (cotton tree) and ungaire (freshwater swamp reeds) have been carefully harvested on Country

where they still grow strong today on our beautiful island home, Minjerribah/North Stradbroke Island.

These materials weave together the strong relationships and interconnections between First Nations people, land, sky, sea, ecosystems and the space in between. This bond is grounded in Country and is unbreakable. The thread that binds us is Country.”



**Daniel Walbidi** – Yulparitja/ Mangala language, lives Bidiyadanga, WA.

### Kirriwirri 2025

“Kirriwirri is my grandfather’s and grandmother’s Country. That is where they brought up all their children, and where my father was brought up. It is like their family home, their roots. There is big claypan at this place, it is an important place for our family. Our clan is also named Kirriwirri, and individual members of our clan are named Kirriwirri.”







Kathleen Kngale *Wild plum*.



Emily Kngwarreye *Alalgura Winter*.

# Four of the Utopia regions best at Fireworks Gallery



FIREWORKS Gallery in Meanjin (Bowen Hills) has bought together four of the most respected Anmatyerr women artists from the Utopia region of the Northern Territory for the exhibition *The Ancient PRESENT II* until 31 August.

It features works by Kathleen Kngale, Polly Kngale, Angelina Kngale and Emily Kngwarreye. FireWorks Gallery Director,

Michael Eather, said the gallery's second iteration of the *Ancient PRESENT* series celebrates the dynamic continuum of Aboriginal painting traditions.

"We sometimes forget this is the oldest living culture in the world. Yet, it is also modern art, created for the here and now," he said.

Mr Eather said Kathleen Kngale's paintings present a subliminal mapping of cultural and ecological knowledge.

"Her spontaneous, free-flowing stippled technique creates networks of fine, painterly dots that evoke seasonal cycles featuring wildflower blooms, ripening bush fruit and the sacred rhythms of women's Awelye ceremonies."

Art historian and academic Dr Marie Geissler describes Kathleen Kngale's work as a homage to her stewardship of Country.

"Her paintings express her understandings of the complex and intricate nature of the local

ecologies, essential for survival," she said.

Elsewhere in the gallery the profound legacy of Emily Kngwarreye is made manifest in her major work, *Alalgura Winter*.

Dr Geissler described how the creative wave Kngwarreye fostered at Utopia paved the way for the success of many women artists in the community who followed in her stead.

"They successfully adapted her working vocabulary for their own

purposes," said Dr Geissler.

"Her monumental works are landscapes of the mind and portals to an idealised world that remind us of the pristine beauty of Country."

Mr Eather said it was through Emily's influence the women of Utopia, including surviving sister Angelina Kngale, developed their own similar yet unique visual languages, adapting her use of vibrant colour, gestural brushwork, fine stippling and fluid lines.

# Sea Country and research of First Nations record keeping recognised in fellowship



SOUTH Australian artist and Narungga man Brad Darkson has received the 2025 John Mulvaney Fellowship, enabling vital research on First Nations' knowledges of seaweed management.

The fellowship will support Darkson's PhD research, enabling meetings with First Nations collaborators across Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand), Canada and the US to research traditional approaches to coastal waterways management. Darkson will present his research in a landmark interdisciplinary art exhibition.

"Art is an excellent way to communicate science and philosophy," Mr Darkson said.

"First Nations communities should be at the forefront of environmental management and my research output will contribute to empowering Indigenous people to be leaders in this important work."

"I also believe that as Traditional Owners we have a cultural obligation to care for Country, and I see my research as part of fulfilling that obligation."

The judging committee also awarded a High Commendation to Jaru Kitja Yawuru woman Dr Jacinta Walsh.

Dr Walsh's research focuses on the collection, access and governance of Indigenous records in remote areas of Western Australia, documents critical to families tracing their ancestry and to Australia's shared history.

Her research looks at Indigenous

family histories, truth-telling, and reconciliation, together with First Nations youth experiences of juvenile justice and out-of-home care systems.

An adoptee herself, Dr Walsh is deeply committed to ensuring First Nations families have access to historical archives that preserve generational memory.

The prestigious John Mulvaney Fellowship is awarded annually to a high achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early career researcher/PhD student, providing \$4,000 to support international travel to undertake research.

Australian Academy of the Humanities President, Professor Stephen Garton, said the exceptional calibre of applicants for this year's Mulvaney Fellowship demonstrated the remarkable talent and innovation of Indigenous researchers working across the humanities.

"As a graduate of the Fine Arts, Brad's groundbreaking research in seaweed management will ensure Brad's next artistic exhibition will carry key learnings from international traditional practices," said Professor Garton.

"We are also pleased to acknowledge Dr Walsh's vital work with a High Commendation, drawing attention to her contributions to scholarship in genealogy and life story research."

Mr Darkson is a Narungga man with lineages across South Australia and Western Australia including Point Pearce Poonindie, Raukkan and Annesfield.

As a multi-media artist, his work focuses on environmental advocacy and his connection to Country. He has

exhibited across Australia, including the Sydney Opera House, the Australian War Memorial, Casula Powerhouse Art Centre, and the University of Sunshine Coast Art Gallery.

His recent work, *waiting for kakirra* (2023), an animated multi-projection installation, featured in *Between Waves*, an exhibition commissioned by the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) in Melbourne.

In 2019, Darkson and his wife, marine biologist Dr Chloe Darkson, launched seaweed enterprise, Moonrise Seaweed Co, on the South Australian coast. This work inspired Brad to undertake a PhD at Flinders University, focusing on sea stewardship, Indigenous leadership and sustainable practices.

"Seaweed has this unique ability to sequester carbon really quickly, it can be used to remediate soil and create biostimulants and fertilisers," he said.

"It absorbs nutrients from topsoil runoff, drawing that out of the water and putting it back into the earth. And then there's the human-health benefit — seaweed contains your healthy omegas, fatty acids, minerals and dietary fibre."

"We're caring for Country through our work. That's something we've been doing for millennia as Traditional Owners in this country. That right to care for Country, that obligation, has been taken away from people through colonisation, but when people are given the chance to fulfil that cultural obligation to care for Country, there's a healing process for both people and Country. It's fulfilling."



Phd candidate Brad Darkson.



Dr Jacinta Walsh.





Birren.



Electric Fields. Photo Morgan Sette.



Jess Hitchcock. Photo Claudio Raschella.



Daniel and David Wilfred. Photo Sarah Walker.

# Clancestry celebrating culture, connection and community



CLANCESTRY, Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC)'s iconic festival, provides a platform for both established and emerging First Nations artists. Headline events include *Wata: a gathering for songmen*, improvising soloists an orchestra on 31 July, Bangarra Dance Theatre's *Illume* from 1 to 9 August, and Electric Fields with Queensland Symphony Orchestra on 2 August. *First Gathering*, a much-loved fixture on the Clancestry program, returns on 31 July to honour the ancestral history of the land, pay tribute to its spirits, and commemorate its enduring legacy. This free event, open to the public, is the official welcoming ceremony for this year's festival. It will bring

together First Nations artists and cultural groups to present dance, song, and cultural practices, sharing community connection to the land and its people. *Art of Song* on 8 August will feature three powerful First Nations songwomen – Jess Hitchcock, Megan Sarmardin, and SOLCHLD accompanied by the evocative piano melodies of Paul Grabowsky. This deeply moving performance offers an authentic and heartfelt exploration of identity, connection, and tradition. *Biggest Mobs* on 1 August is the epic culmination of QPAC's *BlakBeats* First Nations music development program, presented in association with Atlas Studio – a platform that unites musically diverse First Nations artists to create and push boundaries. This evening will showcase the fire, rhythm, and energy of Garret

Lyon, Keysody, and Rudy Matoy, three talented artists from previous *BlakBeats* programs. Be the first to experience the next big voices in First Nations theatre with *Sparks: First Nations Play Readings* on 9 August. Presented by QPAC and Playlab Theatre, *Sparks* is the culmination of a six-month program nurturing aspiring First Nations playwrights, guiding artists from the very first idea to sharing their art live on stage. Experience works from emerging theatre makers Bianca Valentine, Jamaine-Errol Wilesmith, and Auntie Valerie Matthews in this free event. Big and little kids alike will rejoice with the return of *Clancestry for Kids* on Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 August. This free, family-friendly event transforms the Melbourne Street Green into a vibrant space filled with art, music,

and playful discovery. Experience the wonders of Living Sculptures: *How The Birds Got Their Colours*, *Stomp with Auntie Sharron*, *Find Our Friends*, *Face Painting* with Kaylah Coghill, and IUIH Arts and Crafts across the course of the weekend. The much-loved *Mob Music* stage returns in 2025 with an epic line-up of First Nations musicians and artists, hosted by DJ Big Mike. This impressive free live music event will run from Saturday 9 to Sunday 10 August on the Melbourne Street Green from dusk each day. Saturday will see invigorating live performances from Wawumun, Sachém, Dean Brady, and Kee'ahn, followed by exciting sets from Keely, Sunny Luwe, Birren, and Jarulah featuring Blackline The Band on Sunday. Visual artistry is celebrated in the *Live Art at Clancestry*

program, showcasing bespoke creations from artists across Fish Lane and Melbourne Street Green. *Street Art LIVE* on 2 August at Fish Lane will see artists K-Rae Designs, Wellborn, and New Dreaming Art create new art based on their interpretation of this year's Mob Word – YARN – and what is means to them. On 9 and 10 August, the renowned *Mob Words* returns to the Melbourne Street Green with Arabella Walker, Boneta-Marie Mabo, Dean Tyson (Bingkin) and Dylan Bolger leaving their creative mark on YARN. These artists have been engaged by Aboriginal Art Co and have been supported in their Safe Space Residency Program in previous years, providing culturally safe and personalised career support. Tickets are on sale now via [qpac.com.au/clancestry](http://qpac.com.au/clancestry)



# Designing a new world



JORDAN Ardler, a young Dharawal woman, offers insight into her experience of working in the built environment and the opportunities for young people to bring valuable lived experience to designing with Country.

"On my first day at university, I walked in, then walked out. I rang my mum and said, 'I don't belong here.'

"I'd won a scholarship to do a Bachelor of Design at UNSW College of Fine Arts (COFA) in Sydney, she said.

"As a shy girl who had spent her entire life living in community at La Perouse, in Sydney, I was completely out of my comfort zone. I was the only Indigenous person in this new place, surrounded by strangers who didn't look, dress or talk like me.

"Just try to stay for one day," said mum.

"Reluctantly, I went back in and found my first class. Fast forward 13 years, and I'm working full-time at Aboriginal-owned design practice Yerrabingin as a project officer, community engagement officer and graphic designer.

"It's a job I love and something I could never have imagined – working in two worlds, giving voice to community and bridging understanding between people and cultures.

"My journey to here was not straightforward.

"From a young age, I was always an artist. I painted a lot, but was the black sheep in a sport-oriented family.

"My high school art teacher saw my passion and encouraged me. She told me about graphic design, and I went to TAFE while I was still at school to do my Cert-III in Design Fundamentals.

"This taught me how to use computers and design applications but I was still a long way from unlocking what design can do.

"My teacher took me to visit the universities and encouraged me to apply for design courses.

"I was hesitant – no one in my family had been to university – but I was also excited to learn.

"I received offers from the University of Technology, Sydney,



The Yerrabingin team visits its project at 477 Pitt Street. Photo: Yerrabingin.



Jordan Ardler.

and COFA (now UNSW Art & Design). I chose COFA because it was smaller and felt safer.

"University opened my eyes to the world of design. We did everything, from *Vivid* lighting to animation. A unit in spatial design lit a spark in me and I learnt that design isn't just about how things look.

"Suddenly the way I saw the world made sense. I graduated with Honours – a designer, but not yet ready to take the leap into another world.

"I had been working in community as a youth support leader since I was 18. The program supports youth at risk of anti-social behaviours, offering guidance and advice. I loved it.

When I finished uni, I was offered the role of manager and that's what I did.

"I was still interested in design on the side. My cousin knew Yerrabingin founder and CEO, Christian Hampson.

"When Christian needed some graphic design work, we were introduced and hit it off immediately. I did freelance work for Christian on and off for four years, also contributing to workshops and as an artist.

"Christian tried to get me to join the Yerrabingin team but I still wasn't ready.

"Then, three years ago at age 27, I had a realisation. If I was going to inspire the next generation – the kids I was working with in my own community – I'd need to get out into the world and lead by example. I picked up the phone to Christian. "I feel like this is the call," he said. "It is," I replied. I was hired.

"At Yerrabingin I have found a second home.

"Our team is family – a diverse group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people from different backgrounds, working together to amplify Indigenous voices and design with Country.

"They welcomed me, supported me, and helped me find my confidence in this new environment.

"As a project officer and community engagement officer, no two days are the same. Designing with Country is connecting with our environments, understanding us as people and our way of bringing our stories to the surface.

"My day might involve a workshop, reviewing reports to ensure they are culturally appropriate, building healthy relationships or giving advice where needed.

"Working in the corporate world has been an eye-opener.

"I was surprised to discover how much is written about our people and not by us.

"Many words mean different things to community and corporates.

"For example, 'engagement' and 'consultation' are words that are used often, often interchangeably, but they don't mean the same thing.

"Engagement is asking a range of people to respond to something.

"Consultation is asking for approval, and needs to go through the person, family or organisation with the authority.

"I used to feel daunted by the corporate world. Now, I feel differently. I'm in a position where I am in the middle and can bring people together.

"Get them on the same playing field, let them have a voice and let them listen and be heard, but also learn from each other. And I love that every day. It's my favourite part of the job, even though it's been like learning a new language.

"To young Indigenous people looking to step into this world, don't be afraid.

"What you can learn and what you can give is equally rewarding – our voices are wanted and needed in this space. Step out of your comfort zone.

"I got here – a quiet girl who had barely been past Maroubra – and I feel more comfortable than ever! Take every opportunity that comes to you, as you never know where it can lead.

"Aboriginal heritage is acknowledging your ancestry. Being Aboriginal is solidifying your identity through a lived experience. Importantly, your lived experience is your greatest asset. It is where you can add the most value and really make a difference, bringing community along with you.

"Being able to bring my aunties to the city for the first time, working with them on projects where they usually get pushed aside, and seeing them smiling, is the best feeling ever." Jordan said.

## Partnership leads to job pathways



OFFICEWORKS and the Clontarf Foundation have come together to prepare young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders for education and employment opportunities.

Jason Fenwick, Clontarf Foundation regional manager said, 'Clontarf exists to support young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men to attend school regularly, stay engaged, complete their education and transition successfully into meaningful employment'.

"We provide a wrap-around program with daily pick-ups, early-morning training sessions, and inspiring camps among other targeted

activities – equipping students with the tools to enjoy their schooling experience and guidance to help them navigate their journey beyond school," Fenwick said.

A testament to this partnership is Kynan Lamb, a Kooma and Murrawarri man and Clontarf Harristown alumnus who began his journey with Officeworks four years ago through the Clontarf Foundation program.

Demonstrating determination and dedication, Kynan finished school and has progressed through the Officeworks business, now serving in a leadership role at the newly relocated Officeworks Toowoomba store in south-eastern Queensland and continues to serve as a role model for current Clontarf students.

He is also participating in the Wesfarmers Indigenous Leadership Program, undertaking a Certificate II in Indigenous Leadership, furthering his inspiring career journey.

Tina Foelz, store business manager at Officeworks Toowoomba, has been a passionate advocate for the Clontarf program, playing a key role in embedding it into her store.

"With more than 30 Clontarf students and alumni currently employed across our network of stores, we remain committed to strengthening this partnership and continuing the important work of creating meaningful education and employment pathways for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men," she said.



Kynan Lamb in his role at Officeworks.



# Employment

EXECUTIVE • PROFESSIONAL • POSITIONS VACANT

## Wiradjuri/Murrawarri man to pursue surgical dreams



KIERAN Cubby, a proud Wiradjuri/Murrawarri man from Dubbo, is on a determined path to becoming an orthopaedic surgeon – a dream that once seemed out of reach.

Achieving his dream is no mean feat. But, the University of Newcastle (UoN) student is committed to overcoming any hurdles, and with the help of financial support through the UoN's Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP) postgraduate initiative for Indigenous students, it's one less hurdle Kieran (pictured below) needs to jump.

The University of Newcastle's Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP) initiative for Indigenous students provides Australian Government-subsidised financial support across its full suite of postgraduate programs.

This unique initiative ensures accessible and affordable access to postgraduate study for Indigenous students who are looking to further their career.

Following the completion of his Bachelor of Medical Science/Doctor of Medicine, Kieran is now a Resident Medical Officer at John Hunter Hospital.

His next goal is to complete the Master of Traumatology program – a crucial step toward Kieran becoming one of the few Indigenous orthopaedic surgeons in Australia.

"I didn't get the marks I needed at school to get into medicine, but the university's Yapug and Miroma Bunbilla programs and support from the Wollotuka Institute really set me up," Kieran said.

"Without them and without CSP, I wouldn't be where I am today."

Kieran said he originally thought he wanted to be a GP.

"Once I got into the program and started working in the hospital, I realised orthopaedics is where my passion lies," said Kieran.

"CSP has helped me carry out the studies I need to become a surgeon.

"For people like myself who don't have financial benefactors to help get through university, it's made a real difference," added Kieran.

With fewer than ten qualified Indigenous surgeons in the country, Kieran's path is difficult and expensive – a barrier that often turns students away from studying medicine.

Now a new father, Kieran is balancing hospital shifts, postgraduate study, and making time for family life.

University of Newcastle Vice Chancellor, Professor Alex Zelinsky, said Kieran's impressive journey shows the transformative impact of the CSP initiative for Indigenous students.

"It's helping to shape the next generation of Indigenous leaders in medicine, just like Kieran," said Professor Zelinsky.



## Jumbo serves community, through passion for health care



COMMITTED to making a difference through his health-care work and studies in the Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Practice with CQUniversity, a Cherbourg man is now not only rewriting his own story but helping others understand theirs.

Driven by a commitment to lifelong learning and a profound sense of responsibility to his community, Jumbo Prior (pictured) is forging a path of strength, service and self-determination.

However, study was something that this health-care advocate initially hadn't accounted for.

"I didn't graduate from Year 12 in high school, and I had never thought in my life that I could attend university to study," Jumbo said.

"When you are told you can't do things for a long time, you start to believe that negativity, but I wanted to prove to myself that I could do the course and work hard for the results."

Combined with his journey of self-determination is Jumbo's

intrinsic positivity and leadership, demonstrated through his passion to serve his community.

"I want to make a difference, and make sure that my skillset and knowledge on health care is relevant and up-to-date for my clients and community," Jumbo said.

"My motivation comes from just wanting to keep learning and gaining new skills, researching about my clients conditions and have some awareness of their issues to better support them in my role.

Having overcome personal struggles with mental health and no support system at the time to lean on, Prior realises firsthand the many challenges and stigma that still exists around mental health today, and is working hard to break down those barriers – even if that means he never clocks off.

"Being a health worker in a small community is a 24/7 job – you don't just see clients in the clinic but in public daily and they'll want to yarn about their health issues, but I love to educate and advocate for them when needed during our appointments, breaking the barrier of western terminology

and medical jargon to help them understand the message being delivered, and use more appropriate language they can understand," Prior said.

"Personally, I became a health worker while going through depression and suicidal ideation issues in 2013."

Prior said having no one to talk to or turn to as an Indigenous man was hard due to the shame and stigma attached to men speaking out and having feelings, "so I wanted to become a role model and help other Indigenous men, boys, and teenagers in dealing with their mental-health issues and helping them understand the topic more with positive support".

He said that he continues to experience healing through his artwork and Aboriginal heritage, and through the grounding support of his family – foundations of which he said spurs him on to bettering himself, and hopes to impart in the healing journey of others.

"Being able to also use my artwork and heritage to inspire others by my storytelling through my paintings has helped to heal my soul and mind," Prior said.



## 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)

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THE UNIVERSITY  
OF QUEENSLAND  
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

## Professor / Associate Professor, Teaching and Learning (Indigenous)

**The role** Reporting directly to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Engagement (DVCIE), this leadership position will develop the strategic direction for Indigenous Education at UQ, monitor the whole-of-university approach to Indigenous Education, develop strategies to enhance the recruitment of Indigenous students, ensure support and success for our Indigenous students.

**The person** We're searching for an experienced academic leader with a PhD (or equivalent) and a national profile spanning across teaching, research, and engagement. You will bring leadership in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander matters, supported by a strong knowledge and planning of both organisation-wide campaigns and involvement with external stakeholders.

**Remuneration** This is a full-time, fixed-term position for five years at Academic Level D or E.

**Applications close** 3 August 2025

**Job No.** R-52653

UQ considers that being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander is a genuine occupational requirement for this position under s25 of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)* and the filling of this position constitutes a special/equal opportunity measure under section 8(1) of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)*. **The position is therefore only open to Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.** The successful candidate will be required to provide evidence to confirm that they are an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

Visit [careers.uq.edu.au](https://careers.uq.edu.au) for more career opportunities and to obtain a copy of the position description and application process.  
The University of Queensland values diversity and inclusion.

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## NOW HIRING



GUNDITJ MIRRING  
Traditional Owners  
Aboriginal Corporation  
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- **Executive Manager of Planning & Development**  
Fixed term (1 year), Full-time, 38 hrs per week  
\$140,000 p.a + Super, Salary Packaging is available
- **Economic Development Project Support Officer**  
Fixed term (1 year), Full-time, 38 hrs per week  
\$80,000 – \$85,000 p.a, negotiable subject to qualification & experience + Super, Salary Packaging is available
- **Education Liaison Officer**  
Ongoing, Full Time, 38hrs per week  
\$80,000 – \$85,000 p.a, negotiable subject to qualification & experience + Super, Salary Packaging is available
- **Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Compliance Officer**  
Ongoing, Full Time, 38 hrs per week  
\$80,000 – \$82,000 p.a, negotiable subject to qualification & experience + Super, Salary Packaging is available
- **Cleaner (2)**  
Part-time (L3) – 22.8 hrs per week – \$32.34 per hr  
Casual (L2) – 22.8 hrs per week – \$33.38 (inc. loading) per hr

### Work Location

**248 Condah Estate Rd, BREAKAWAY CREEK VIC 3304**

Applications close: **18 August 2025, 5.00pm**

Email your CV & Cover Letter addressing KSC to:

**[hr@gunditjmirring.com](mailto:hr@gunditjmirring.com)**

For Position Description: **[gunditjmirring.com/employment](https://gunditjmirring.com/employment)**



### Expressions of Interest for QYAC's Register of Consultants and Contractors

The Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation (QYAC) is a registered Native Title Body Corporate ICN 7564. QYAC is located at Dunwich, North Stradbroke Island and cares for Land and Sea country in the Moreton Bay Region on behalf of the Quandamooka Peoples. QYAC is seeking culturally competent consultants, contractors, experts, or people with at least 5 years' experience in the below disciplines, to assist in the delivery of services, projects, and programs by QYAC on behalf of the Quandamooka Peoples.

**Architecture & Design** / Building & Construction / **Demolition** / Waste Management / **Plumbing & Electrical** / Business Development & Management / **Finance & Economics** / Asset Management / **Holiday Accommodation** / Cleaning / **Catering and Hospitality** / Tourism / **Legal** / Strategic Planning and Policy / **Community Master Planning** / Community Development / **Housing** / Planning & Environment / **Ecology & Conservation** / Marine Sciences / **Fire Management** / Pest and Weed Management / **Heavy Machinery** / Forestry / **Visual Art & Craft** / Public Art Works / **Production & Performance** / Media, Marketing & Communications / **Information & Digital Technology** / Research, Training and Education / **Intellectual Property** / Land Management / **Native Title** / Cultural Heritage/ **Social Impact Assessment Expert**

To express your interest contact us via email [governance@qyac.net.au](mailto:governance@qyac.net.au) by COB 15th August 2025

### Bogal Local Aboriginal Land Council

## Chief Executive Officer

**Salary range \$70k-\$95k (depending on qualifications) plus superannuation**

**Job description:** Bogal Local Aboriginal Land Council (BLALC) is seeking a CEO who practices purpose led leadership to achieve the social, cultural, economic, and environmental aspirations of the BLALC Aboriginal Community. The CEO is responsible in ensuring the statutory functions of the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (ALRA) are met, reporting to the Board, managing the day-to-day operations and administration of BLALC, achieving outcomes through the BLALC Community Land and Business Plan, and applying best practice principles to the functions of BLALC. The CEO will develop and maintain strong, respectful relationships with current and emerging partners to ensure the continuation of current BLALC programs and identify and deliver new opportunities.

This position is a targeted position open to Aboriginal applicants only. Applications from Non-Aboriginal applicants will not progress to the next stage of recruitment. In accordance with Sections 14 and 21 of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 and under Clause 26 of the Government Sector Employment (General) Rules 2014.

**For further information or to obtain a copy of the position description, please email your request to Nicholas Duroux at [nicholas.duroux@alc.org.au](mailto:nicholas.duroux@alc.org.au) using the subject line: Chief Executive Officer – Bogal LALC or call 0447 074 695.**

**Applications close: Friday 8th August 2025**



Ration Shed  
Museum

### RATION SHED MUSEUM (CHERBOURG)

#### 2 X JOB OPPORTUNITIES

- MUSEUM COORDINATOR
- MUSEUM RECEPTION AND TOUR GUIDE

For all the details and to apply visit:  
[www.employmentmatters.com.au](https://www.employmentmatters.com.au)



Murra Mia AC

Murra Mia Aboriginal Corporation  
Strengthening Aboriginal Tenancy Program

## Caseworker x 1 Full-Time

**Location - Penrith**

**Overview of Position:** The Strengthening Aboriginal Tenancy Project will provide tenancy support through local strategies to Aboriginal people with complex needs whose tenancies are at risk of failure. Support includes case management, advocacy, community outreach services and assisted referrals to other specialist support services to sustain new or existing tenancies.

The caseworker will work as part of a team to provide practical supportive and specialist intervention to those who seek assistance from the project.

This is an identified position under Section 9A of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977.

**Enquires: Michelle Craig on 0457 798 647 or email: [michelle.craig@aru.org.au](mailto:michelle.craig@aru.org.au)**

**Closing date: 5.00pm 11 August 2025.**



# Are you our next Cadet Journalist?

Head to [koorimail.com](http://koorimail.com) for more info - Identified position

## Have your say on proposed changes to gas and pipeline regulations and guidelines for NSW

The NSW Government is inviting community feedback on proposed changes that will make it clearer and easier for landholders and private companies to negotiate land access for pipeline projects.

To support the legal powers under the *Pipelines Act 1967*, the NSW Government is creating new guidelines to:

- make the roles and responsibilities for seeking land access for surveys clearer so everyone understands what is involved
- provide greater clarity on what needs to be done to get agreements with landholders before compulsory acquisition can be considered by the Minister for Energy.

The NSW Government is also proposing to strengthen the requirements for operators under the *Pipelines Act 1967* and *Gas Supply Act 1996*, including penalties.

Consultation closes at 11.59 pm on Sunday 7 September 2025.

Scan the QR code to visit our website to learn more and provide your feedback.

If you have questions or need help to register for a session, contact [DCCEEWConsultation@SECNewgate.com.au](mailto:DCCEEWConsultation@SECNewgate.com.au) or call 1800 370 633.

[www.energy.nsw.gov.au/public-consultations](http://www.energy.nsw.gov.au/public-consultations)

### Notice Under Section 29 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), Mining Lease Application 654 (Act 1992)

This notice is given in accordance with the requirements of Section 29 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).

**Description of the nature of the act**  
The Minister administering the *Mining Act 1992* intends to grant a mining lease under section 63(1)(a) of the *Mining Act 1992* (NSW) on land subject to native title.

Should a lease be granted, the lease holder may apply to renew or transfer lease prior to it expiring (including partial renewals or partial transfers).

**Note:** If the lease is granted, the renewal, re grant or re-making (including partial renewals or partial transfers) or extension of the term of the lease may be valid pursuant to section 24MD(1) of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) without further notification, provided the requirements in section 26D(1) are satisfied.

**Holder's details**  
Aston Coal 2 Pty Ltd (ACN 139 472 567), ICRA MC Pty Ltd (ACN 147 657 074) & J-POWER Australia Pty Ltd (ACN 002 307 682) are the applicants for Mining Lease Application 654 which, if granted would authorise the mining for coal for an initial term of up to 21 years.

**Description of area that may be affected**  
The entire area of Mining Lease Application 654 that covers an area of about 130 hectares situated approximately 20 kilometres north northeast of the town of Boggabri, in the State of NSW as shown on the diagram below.

**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* (Cth) the notification day is 14 August 2025. 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 this notice.

## 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 34143 sought by ALEXANDER JOSEPH CHALA over an area of 7 Blocks (13 km<sup>2</sup>) depicted below for a term of 6 years, within the BATCHELOR locality.

Exploration Licence 34144 sought by ALEXANDER JOSEPH CHALA over an area of 4 Blocks (10 km<sup>2</sup>) depicted below for a term of 6 years, within the RANFORD HILL locality.

Exploration Licence 34140 sought by NORTH TENNANT MINERALS PTY LTD, ACN 654 828 912 over an area of 6 Blocks (10 km<sup>2</sup>) depicted below for a term of 6 years, within the FLYNN locality.

Exploration Licence 34142 sought by NORTH TENNANT MINERALS PTY LTD, ACN 654 828 912 over an area of 80 Blocks (257 km<sup>2</sup>) depicted below for a term of 6 years, within the CRAWFORD 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.

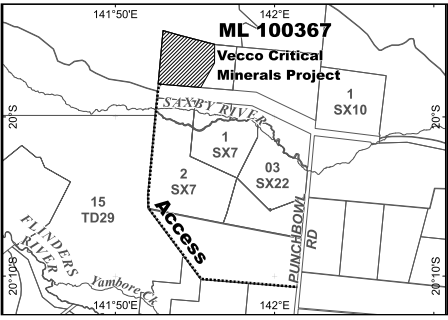
**Notification Day:** 30 July 2025



NOTICE OF PROPOSED GRANT OF MINING LEASE
NATIVE TITLE ACT 1993 (CTH) SECTION 29

The Queensland Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development, PO Box 15216, City East, Queensland, 4002, hereby gives notice in accordance with section 29 of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) of the proposed grant of Mining Lease (ML) shown below, subject to the provisions of the Mineral Resources Act 1989 (Qld).

ML 100367 applied for by Vecco Industrial Pty Ltd (ACN: 158 805 497), over an area of 3154 ha, centred approximately 70 kms North of Julia Creek, in the locality of the McKinlay Shire Council.



Nature of Act(s): The grant of a Mining Lease under the Mineral Resources Act 1989 (Qld) authorises the holder to mine and carry out associated activities subject to the Mineral Resources Act 1989 (Qld) for a term not exceeding twenty-five (25) years, with the possibility of renewals for terms not exceeding twenty-five (25) years. The grant of the Mining Lease includes the granting of access as shown.

Name and address of person doing acts: It is proposed that the Mining Lease be granted subject to the provisions of the Mineral Resources Act 1989 (Qld) by the Queensland Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development, PO Box 15216, City East, Queensland, 4002.

Native Title Parties: Under the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) any person who is a "native title party" is entitled to certain rights in relation to the proposed grant of a Mining Lease. Under section 30 of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth), persons have until three (3) months after the Notification Day to take certain steps to become native title parties in relation to this notice. Enquiries in relation to filing a native title determination application may be directed to the Federal Court, Brisbane Registry, Level 6, Harry Gibbs Commonwealth Law Courts Building, 119 North Quay, Brisbane, Queensland, 4000. Telephone: 1300 720 980

or Email: nativetitleQLD@fedcourt.gov.au. Enquiries in relation to the registration of a native title determination application may be directed to the National Native Title Tribunal, Brisbane Registry, Level 5, Harry Gibbs Commonwealth Law Courts Building, 119 North Quay, Brisbane, Queensland, 4000. Telephone: (07) 3052 4040.

Further Information: May be obtained from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development, Mineral Assessment Hub, Level 9, Verde Tower, 445 Flinders Street, Townsville, Qld, 4810. Telephone: (07) 4447 9230 or Email: MineralHub@resources.qld.gov.au.

Notification Day: 13 August 2025



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 Mines, Petroleum and Exploration, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004 may grant the following tenement applications under the Mining Act 1978:

Table with 7 columns: Tenement Type, No., Applicant, Area, Locality, Centroid, Shire. It lists three mining lease applications with details on area, location, and 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: 30 July 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.
For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004, or telephone (08) 9222 3518.

DMIRS 27244



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 Mines, Petroleum and Exploration, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004 may grant the following tenement applications under the Mining Act 1978:

Table with 7 columns: Tenement Type, No., Applicant, Area\*, Locality, Centroid, Shire. It lists 30 exploration and prospecting licence applications with details on area, location, and shire.

Nature of the act: Grant of prospecting licences which authorises the applicant to prospect for minerals for a term of 4 years from date of grant. Grant of Special Prospecting Licences, which authorises the applicant to prospect for minerals for a term up to 4 years from the date of grant. Grant of exploration licences, which authorises the applicant to explore for minerals for a term of 5 years from the date of grant.
Notification day: 30 July 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.
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. 30 November 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.
For further information about the act (including extracts of plans showing the boundaries of the applications), contact the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration, 100 Plain Street, East Perth WA 6004, or telephone (08) 9222 3518.

\* - 1 Graticular Block = 2.8 km2

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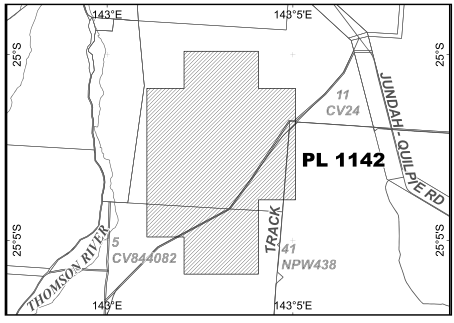




NOTICE OF PROPOSED GRANT OF A PETROLEUM LEASE
NATIVE TITLE ACT 1993 (CTH) SECTION 29

The Queensland Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing, Minister for Regional and Rural Development, PO Box 15216, City East, Queensland, 4002, hereby gives notice in accordance with section 29 of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) of the proposed grant of Petroleum Lease (PL) 1142 shown below, subject to the provisions of the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 (Qld).

PL 1142 applied for by Bridgeport Energy (QLD) Pty Limited ACN: 138 114 637, over an area of 19 Sub-blocks [approx. 5899.55 ha], centred approximately 40 km North-East of Windorah, in the locality of Barcoo Shire Council.



Nature of Act(s): The grant of a Petroleum Lease under the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 (Qld), authorises the holder explore for, develop and produce commercial quantities of petroleum for a maximum term not exceeding fifteen (15) years with the possibility of renewals for terms not exceeding fifteen (15) years.

Name and address of person doing acts: It is proposed that the Petroleum Lease be granted subject to the provisions of the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 (Qld) by the Queensland Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing, Minister for Regional and Rural Development, PO Box 15216, City East, Queensland, 4002.

Native Title Parties: Under the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) any person who is a "native title party" is entitled to certain rights in relation to the proposed grant of a Petroleum Lease. Under section 30 of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth), persons have until three (3) months after the Notification Day to take certain steps to become native title parties in relation to this notice. Enquiries in relation to filing a native title determination application may be directed to the Federal Court, Brisbane Registry,

Level 6, Harry Gibbs Commonwealth Law Courts Building, 119 North Quay, Brisbane, Queensland, 4000. Telephone: 1300 720 980 or Email: nativetitleQLD@fedcourt.gov.au. Enquiries in relation to the registration of a native title determination application may be directed to the National Native Title Tribunal, Brisbane Registry, Level 5, Harry Gibbs Commonwealth Law Courts Building, 119 North Quay, Brisbane, Queensland, 4000. Telephone: (07) 3052 4040.

Further information: May be obtained from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development, Level 4, 1 William Street, Brisbane, Queensland, 4000. Telephone: (07) 3199 8119 or Email: petroleumhub@resources.qld.gov.au

Notification Day: 13 August 2025



Notice of an application to register an area agreement on the Register of Indigenous Land Use Agreements in New South Wales

Notification day: 6 August 2025



NI2025/001 Licences ILUA

Description of the agreement area:

The ILUA area covers 204 separate land parcels centred about 150km north west of Dubbo. The combined area of the land parcels is approx. 82 sq km. Each land parcel is listed as an attachment to the electronic copy of this notice available via the public notices page at www.nntt.gov.au

Relevant LGAs: Bogan, Bourke, Brewarrina, Carrathool, Central Darling, Cobar, Coonamble, Gilgandra, Lachlan, Walgett and Warren Shire Councils

The agreement contains the following statements:

[Explanatory notes in brackets inserted by the National Native Title Tribunal]

5. APPLICATION OF THE NATIVE TITLE ACT 1993 (CTH) Validation and surrender of native title 5.3 Section 24EBA(1) and (3) of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) [(NTA)] and section 30(1) and (2) of the Native Title (New South Wales) Act 1994 (NSW) apply, such that all future acts that are identified and/or described in this Agreement which have previously been done invalidly and which are not intermediate period acts or past acts are valid. 5.4 Section 24EB(2) of the [NTA] applies, such that all future acts described in clauses 9.1, 9.4 and 9.7, being future acts that are in a class covered by this Agreement and done in relation to land or waters in the Agreement Area on and after the Registration Date, are valid to the extent that they affect native title, provided that they are done in accordance with the procedures set out in this Agreement. 5.6 Sections 24CB(e) and 24EB(1)(d) of the [NTA] apply, such that the Applicant surrenders all native title rights and interests in relation to the lands and waters described in Schedule 4 of this Agreement and the surrender of native title extinguishes such native title rights and interests.

9. CONSENT TO EXISTING INTERESTS, FUTURE ACTS AND VALIDATION Future interests over s 47B parcels in Schedule 1 9.1 Future Interests in relation to the parcels listed in Schedule 1 of this Agreement (Schedule 1 Future Interests) are the following rights and interests, in so far as they cover those parcels: (a) any renewal, re-grant, re-making or extension of the term of any of the existing interests described in Schedule 2, as provided in clause 17 of "Schedule Four – Other Interests" of the approved determination of native title; and (b) any grant of a licence, permissive occupancy or other authority for: (i) primary production purposes (within the meaning of section 24GA of the [NTA]); or (ii) access purposes or water related purposes (such as irrigation channel, levee bank, pipeline, pump site or dam), within any of the lands and waters described at Schedule 1.

Consent to and validation of Schedule 1 Future Interests over s 47B parcels in Schedule 1 9.2 For the purpose of section 24EB(1)(b)(ii) of the [NTA], the Native Title Party consents to the acts mentioned in clause 9.1, provided the procedures set out in Schedule 5 are complied with. 9.3 The following provisions apply to the creation or grant of a Schedule 1 Future Interest: (a) the creation or grant will be valid to the extent that it affects native title, in accordance with section 24EB(2) of the [NTA]; and (b) the non-extinguishment principle will apply to the creation or grant, in accordance with section 24EB(3) of the [NTA]; provided the responsible State agency complies with the procedures set out in Schedule 5.

Future Interests over the Encroachment parcels listed in Schedule 3 9.4 Future Interests in relation to the parcels listed in Schedule 3 of this Agreement (Schedule 3 Future Interests) comprise the grant of a licence, permissive occupancy or other authority by the State to authorise Existing Encroachments over land and waters described in Schedule 3. 9.5 For the purpose of section 24EB(1) (b)(i) of the [NTA], the Native Title Party consents to the acts mentioned in clause 9.4, noting that the notice requirements set out in clause 4.2 of Schedule 5 apply. 9.6 The following provisions apply to the grant of a Schedule 3 Future Interest: (a) the grant will be valid to the extent that it affects native title, in accordance with section 24EB(2) of the [NTA]; and (b) the non-extinguishment principle will apply to the grant, in accordance with section 24EB(3) of the [NTA].

Existing interests 9.7 Schedule 2 Existing Interests are the rights and interests defined in Schedule 2, as provided in clause 17 of "Schedule Four – Other Interests" of the approved determination of native title. Consent to and validation of Schedule 2 Existing Interests 9.8 For the purpose of section 24EBA(1)(a)(i) of the [NTA], the Schedule 2 Existing Interests are valid. 9.9 The following provisions apply to the Schedule 2 Existing Interests: (a) the Schedule 2 Existing Interests are valid to the extent that they affect native title, pursuant to section 24EBA(3) of the [NTA]; and (b) the non-extinguishment principle applies to the Schedule 2 Existing Interests, in accordance with section 24EBA(4) of the [NTA].

10. ALTERNATIVE FUTURE ACTS REGIME 10.1 A Future Act that is a Schedule 1 Future Interest or a Schedule 3 Future Interest must be done in accordance with the procedures set out in Schedule 5 (Alternative Future Acts Regime). 10.2 The parties acknowledge that if the procedures in Schedule 5 (Alternative future acts regime) are not complied with, this Agreement will not be effective to validate the Future Act. 10.3 A Future Act that is proposed to be done in relation to the Agreement Area on and after the Determination Date or Registration Date that is not a Schedule 1 Future Interest or a Schedule 3 Future Interest must be done in accordance with the [NTA]. 10.4 Nothing in the Alternative Future Acts Regime at Schedule 5 affects the Native Title Party's rights under Division 3 of Part 2 of the [NTA] in relation to any other acts in the Agreement Area.

Agreement Area means the area of land and waters described in [Schedules 1, 3 and 4]. Assignment Deed means an executed deed generally in the form of the document at Schedule 6. Assignment Deed Delivery Date means the date on which the executed Assignment Deed is delivered to the State Minister in accordance with the Assignment Deed. Determination Date means the date on which the Federal Court makes a determination of native title in relation to the Ngemba, Ngiyampaa, Wangaaypuwan and Wayilwan People native title determination application (Federal Court Proceedings NSD 38 of 2019). Future Act has the meaning given by section 233 of the [NTA], but does not include a future act done by the Commonwealth. Native Title Party means: (a) on the commencement of the Agreement — the applicant on behalf of the Ngemba, Ngiyampaa, Wangaaypuwan and Wayilwan People [Please refer to the description of the claim group available on the extract from the Register of Native Title Claims (NC2012/001) (NSD 38/2019)]; (b) after the Agreement is registered, but before the Assignment Deed Delivery Date — the applicant and proposed RNTBC [(Ngemba, Ngiyampaa, Wangaaypuwan, Wayilwan Aboriginal Corporation (ICN 8322))]; and (c) on and after the Assignment Deed Delivery Date — the proposed RNTBC. Registration Date means the date that this Agreement is registered on the Register of Indigenous Land Use Agreements.

Parties to the agreement and their contact addresses:

Elaine Ohlsen, Grace Gordon, Phillip Sullivan, Daniella Chedzey, John Shipp, Danielle Flakelar-Carney, Raymond Thompson, David Clarke, Jaye Lee Snowden, Peter Harris, Pearl Harris, Dennis Rankmore and Josephine (Josie) Winsor as the Applicant in proceedings no. NSD38/2019 NTSCORP Limited, PO Box 2105, STRAWBERRY HILLS NSW 2012	Attorney-General of New South Wales (As State Minister for New South Wales under the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)) GPO Box 5341, SYDNEY NSW 2001	Minister for Lands and Property (As Minister administering the Crown Land Management Act 2016 (NSW)) GPO Box 5341, SYDNEY NSW 2001
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Objections to the registration of an ILUA where the application for registration has been certified:

This application for registration of an indigenous land use agreement (ILUA) has been certified by NTSCORP Limited, the entity performing the functions of the representative body for the area. Any person claiming to hold native title to any part of the area covered by the ILUA may object in writing within the notice period to the registration of this agreement if they think that the application to register the ILUA has not been properly certified. If you wish to object to the registration of this agreement (and you hold or claim to hold native title in any part of the area covered by the agreement) you may only object for one reason: in your view, the application to register the ILUA has not been properly certified, as stated in section 203BE(5)(a), (b) and (c) of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth). You must make this objection in writing and send it to the Native Title Registrar, National Native Title Tribunal, PO Box 12440 George Street Post Shop BRISBANE QLD 4003 (iluas@nntt.gov.au) by 6 November 2025. Generally, procedural fairness will require that the material you provide is given to certain other persons or organisations for comment. It may also be taken into account in the registration of other ILUAs and claimant applications and thus be provided to relevant persons or organisations for comment.

Details of the terms of the agreement are not available from the National Native Title Tribunal.

For assistance and any further information about this application, including the description of the area, call Sylvia Jagtman on 07 3052 4040 or visit www.nntt.gov.au.



# 25 First Nations icons in '25

## Andrew McLeod

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

Known across the football world as “Bunji” (an Indigenous term meaning brother, mate or kinsman) Andrew McLeod was a smooth-moving outside midfielder who etched himself in AFL history.

This was first achieved by being best-on-ground in both the 1997 and 1998 AFL Grand Final victories by the Adelaide Crows, winning the coveted Norm Smith Medal.

He was a dual winner of this accolade, along with Gary Ayers, while Dusty Martin won it three times.

His First Nations heritage is with Wardaman and Warrgamay people through his mother's side.

The youngest of three siblings from Darwin, McLeod was a gifted junior playing for the Northern Territory in the Teal Cup (National U17s championships of the era) and voted best on ground in the team of victory over Victoria.

He moved down to Port Adelaide and was left to fend for himself after his father drove him down from the Top End.

Under the control of the Magpies at SANFL level he played a single Under 17s game, one as well in the Under 19s competition, and four games at reserves level – finishing the season with 14 successive games in the league team.

Just 18 (born on 4 August) he became a SANFL league premiership player in 1994, when the Port Adelaide Magpies defeated Woodville West Torrens to lift the Thomas Seymour Hill Cup triumphantly.

McLeod was sought after by the Fremantle Football Club but the meeting with their coach Jarrad Neesham saw McLeod leave feeling belittled and he refused to play for the Dockers.

In a coup, Adelaide recruiter Tim Johnson negotiated a deal which saw McLeod become a Crow.

He made his AFL debut in round six of the 1995 season but after being dropped the following week came back in round nine against Hawthorn and famously kicked the match-winning dribbling goal from a tight angle at Football Park, quickly marking him as a star of the future.

He was nominated for the Norwich rising star later that year, developed into an elite player under Malcolm Blight, who came to the club in 1997.

In that first Adelaide Football Club Grand Final against Saint Kilda, McLeod produced a masterful performance accumulating 31 possessions and taking 11 marks.

He also won the first of his Malcolm Blight Medals as the Crows best and fairest player in that inaugural



The steely gaze of an ALF legend Andrew Bunji McLeod.



Coaching at Norwood in the SANFL.



With family at the AFL Hall of Fame induction.

premiership season.

Along with his AFL Hall of Fame induction, his accolades would include three Malcolm Blight Medals, the other two in 2001 and 2007. He won the prestigious Leigh Matthews trophy as the AFL Players Association best player in 2001 and gained All Australian honours in '98, 2000, '01, '06 and '07, the last as skipper.

He was the Michael Tuck Medalist in 2003, when the Crows won the pre-season cup and also collected the accolade of captaincy of the International Rules series in 2007 against the Irish. McLeod was the “Dream Team” captain in the 2008 Centenary game against the VFL side and naturally he was in both the Indigenous Team of the Century and the SANFL's Indigenous Team of the Ages.

Other accolades included Jim Stynes Medal in 2005 (International) and the Polly Farmer Medal in 2007 (Aboriginal All-Stars game), along with a Showdown Medal in 2007. He was selected in the “Adelaide team of the first decade” on a halfback flank and is still the Crows games record holder with 340 AFL



With the Crows AFL Women's jumpers he designed.

appearances, yielding 275 goals.

After he finished his AFL playing days in 2010, he went back to play for the NT Thunder in the NEAFL competition for a season, being a member of their 2011 premiership side.

McLeod, with his wife Rachael, has a son Connor who played SANFL league football initially with Woodville West Torrance and now is with the Glenelg Tigers, and a daughter Madison, an accomplished netballer.



# Anxious time for unsigned players

**H**ARD to believe. That's the train of thought that comes to my mind when I see the list of players that are currently unsigned for the 2026 NRL season.

Some are playing for brand new contracts in the coming weeks while others might be eyeing off greener pastures at other clubs or, unfortunately for some, the NRL journey may be coming to an end.

At the time of writing, there are over 100 NRL players with much uncertainty and no home for next season. Some of the players on this list include past State of Origin and Test players, premierships winners and big name stars.

Salary cap issues, depth and mounting pressures from boom rookies could all be factors at this time of the year for clubs considering which players to sign and which players may need to be moved on.

These situations could change in the coming weeks and some decisions may be swayed or made depending on results, performances or even those who might lift the NRL trophy in October.

Some of the names include premierships winners Chad Townsend (2016) and Jordan McLean (2017). State of Origin



**KRIS FLANDERS**

players including Cody Walker, Corey Allan, Kenny Bromwich and Felise Kaufusi. Other big names appearing on the list are some of the current stars for their respective clubs including William Kennedy (Cronulla), Daine Laurie (Penrith) and Adam Elliott (Newcastle).

Surely some of these have to be a misprint?

William Kennedy has been in great form for the Sharks. From his 18 matches he has scored 7 tries and has made 2670 metres with the ball in hand, that's an average of 148m per game. Kennedy has made 5 try assists and 5 line breaks. Defensively he's pulled off 100 tackles and missed 27. Overall, he has scored 50 tries from 125 appearances and was named the

Porter-Gallen Medallist in 2021 as the club's best player.

When Dally M voting went behind closed doors back near the end of May, the Cronulla fullback was in second spot on 29 just behind the Warriors Luke Metcalf on 30. Since that time, Metcalf has sustained a season-ending injury while James Tedesco (Roosters) and Brisbane's Payne Haas have been in brilliant form. Kennedy has continued to be a strong performer for the Sharks and the club is in the top 8.

Cronulla would be mad to let him go and if they did he would be a sensational addition to another club.

Another surprising name to see on the list is South Sydney playmaker, Cody Walker. The 2025 season hasn't been a kind one for Walker or the Rabbitohs in general. They've had a huge injury list throughout the season and have never really had their strongest line-up consistently all year, Walker, has been part of that ordeal for the club.

Whilst Walker's hamstring issues have given him grief this season, there's no doubt that on his day and fully fit, he can win matches. He's played 5 matches for NSW at Origin level, played for the Indigenous All Stars and the Prime Minister's XIII.

You can't beat experience and

with 220 NRL games, Walker has that in spades, also scoring 100 tries. He is 35-years-old, so he may only have a few more seasons left in him, but he is a big part of the Rabbitohs. There are a few good young halves at the club too at present in Jamie Humphreys, Lewis Dodd, Jayden Sullivan and Gerome Burns.

Daine Laurie is a talented fullback for Penrith who came through their juniors pathways to debut back in 2020, however he was always going to be playing second fiddle to Dylan Edwards for the fulltime role of fullback.

Laurie continued his career and showed what he could do with 49 games for the Wests Tigers in 2021-23 before returning to Penrith last year. He has played in 7 matches this year with 2 tries but again has had premierships winner and Origin star, Dylan Edwards, to contend with. When he has filled in, Walker has been very reliable.

Given game time and management, Laurie, could be one of the most exciting fullbacks in the game. That probably can't happen with Edwards at the club, he may have to go elsewhere to show those skills and own the number one jersey.

Another one to raise my eyebrow was Josh Kerr.

The Dolphins forward has one

of the best offloads in the game. The big unit has an uncanny knack of being able to get away a good ball, even in traffic. Kerr was the co-captain of the Indigenous All Stars in the annual clash against the Maori earlier this year and proved himself to be a leader both on and off the field. He has played 7 of those matches for his Mob and is one of the most capped in that fixture.

After 68 games with St. George-Illawarra, the forward returned to Queensland and recently brought up the 100-game milestone. This year he has turned out on 15 occasions for the Dolphins and scored a try. He has carted up the ball for over 1270 metres and has made nearly 250 tackles, not a bad effort considering all his matches this year have been from the interchange bench.

During the State of Origin series, Kerr, was named on the extended squad for Queensland. It says that Billy Slater and the Maroons selectors think pretty highly of Kerr.

Other Indigenous talent that are yet to sign beyond this year are: Blake Taaffe (Bulldogs), Braidon Burns (Cowboys), Jamal Shibusaki (Cowboys), Adam Elliott (Knights), Shaq Mitchell (Rabbitohs), Brent Naden (Tigers) and Jacob Alick-Wieneke (Titans).

# Skinner retained as Jillaroos head coach

By **KRIS FLANDERS**



IN good hands. That's the future for Australian rugby league teams, the Jillaroos and the Kangaroos, with the Australian Rugby League Commission (ARLC)

announcing that Wiradjuri woman Jess Skinner will continue her role as Jillaroos head coach right up to the 2026 World Cup.

Brisbane Broncos legend and multi-winning premierships hero, Kevin Walters, has been named as the new coach of the Kangaroos for the 2025 Ashes Tour.

Skinner has already guided the Jillaroos to success with the coach overseeing their 90-4 demolition of England in Las Vegas earlier this year.

It's a role that Skinner is excited to continue and keep strengthening the women's game.

"I've really enjoyed the the chance to coach at this level, so to be given the opportunity to coach the Jillaroos through the 2026 World Cup is incredibly exciting. The women's game is experiencing continued and significant growth, so to be part of the journey at this level is a real honour," she said.

ARLC Chairman, Peter V'landys, praised Skinner and touted her as being highly-respected and talented.

"Jess has progressed through the coaching pathways and is a fantastic choice to lead Australia's most prolific national women's team until the end of the World Cup," V'landys said.

In other significant signings news, South Sydney winger and prolific try scorer, Alex Johnston, has inked a two-year extension till the end of the 2027 year. Head of Rabbitohs recruitment and retention, Mark Ellison, said the local junior is an inspiration to so many young Indigenous people as well as the people of Papua New Guinea.

"Alex is the greatest try scorer our club has seen and is on track to become the greatest try scorer in the sport's history in



**Wiradjuri woman Jess Skinner.**

this country," Ellison said.

"He is a smart footballer that knows how to finish off a try-scoring movement and how to use his body to put himself in the best position to get over the line."

However, beyond 2027, Johnston could potentially be scoring tries for Papua New Guinea on a regular basis. The dynamic winger told PNG newspaper *The National*, on a recent visit there that he'd be open to being a marquee signing for the NRL club when they make their debut in 2028.

Johnston, who's grandmother Mary was born in PNG, said it would be an extraordinary opportunity.

"With my connection to the country, if there is an offer on the table, I would consider it. It would be pretty cool to be player number 1," Johnston said.

The 30-year-old has played 10 Tests for PNG and 4 games for the Indigenous All Stars.

"My motivation has always been to win competitions. Now it's also to create a legacy and play for my family and make them proud. I want to encourage those young kids playing rugby league to dream big," Johnston said.



**Selwyn Cobbo of the Broncos has signed with the Dolphins.**

Meanwhile, Queensland and Test player Selwyn Cobbo will add another dimension of strike power to the Dolphins' backline after signing a one-year deal for the Redcliffe-based club for next season.

Cobbo can cover fullback, win and centre positions and is a great pick up for an already dangerous Dolphins backline which features the likes of Hamiso Tabuai-Fidow, Herbie Farnworth and Jake Averillo.

Dolphins' CEO, Terry Reader, said in a statement that the Dolphins are all about building a roster that will make them one of the top teams in the NRL.

"Selwyn is an accomplished player who has done some amazing things at both Origin and NRL level. But we believe he has untapped potential to go to even greater heights in our game and are excited about what he can do in a Dolphins jersey."



# Battle of the Gulf heats up



United in rugby league: Doomadgee Dragons and Normanton women's teams having a ball.

By ALF WILSON



SEMI finalists in men's and women's divisions have been decided after round three of the Battle of the Gulf Cluster rugby league competition held at Burketown's Phillip Yanner Memorial Oval on July 12.

It features teams from some of the most isolated Indigenous communities in Australia – Doomadgee, Mornington Island, Normanton, Kowanyama and Burketown. After three rounds the points table was:

- Men: Mornington Island Raiders 11, Normanton Stingers 9, Doomadgee Dragons 8, Burketown Mougibi Danggara 4, Doomadgee United 4 and Kowanyama Minh Kular 0.

- Women: Doomadgee Dragons 9, Mougibi Magawas 8, Normanton 1.

In the men's semi finals at Normanton's John Henry Oval on August 23, Mornington Island will meet Mougibi Danggara and Normanton Stingers will clash with arch rivals Doomadgee Dragons.

In the women's semi final Mougibi Magawas will meet Normanton with the winner to take on minor premiers Doomadgee Dragons in the grand final.

Mornington Island spokesman Anton Saltmere said finishing top was an indication of the hard work that the players and officials had put in.

The well drilled Raiders went through the three rounds undefeated.

"It was a real team effort at Burketown but I respect the other sides as well. Doomadgee Dragons have a big forward pack," Anton said.

Best players for the Raiders were fullback Elijah Joe, Charves Hegarty, five eighth Jaquille Chong and winger Roderick Jacob.

Normanton coach Robert Murray said even though his team would have a home ground advantage come finals, any of the top four teams could win.

"We lost narrowly to Doomadgee and they are going good under Craig Logan and Troy Fraser," Robert said.

Doomadgee Dragons beat Normanton Stingers 12-10 courtesy of a late goal from the sideline by sharp shooter Izaak Toby to break a score deadlock.

Amongst the best for Normanton were Townsville recruit and crafty five eighth Connor Snow, front rower Roger Logan and winger Jarrod Don.

A special mention must go to Kowanyama side which travelled nine hours by bus to get to Burketown.

The Minh Kular side players didn't get to sleep until well after midnight and had to play three games.

The ladies match will be a big drawcard and both sides will have great support.

The men and women's grand finals will be played on the same day after the semis.

A big crowd will converge on Normanton for the climax to the season with all accommodation booked out and interest at the communities really high.

**Footnote:** Sides competing in the comp find it difficult to gain sponsorship and would like to hear from any potential supporters.

For example the cost for Mornington Island players and officials to travel by plane from there to Normanton is prohibitive. A one-way ticket costs \$390 and the side takes 18 players including a few officials for games on the mainland. A return trip costs just over \$14,000.



Burketown Mougibi Danggara and Kowanyama Minh Kular men's teams.



The Mornington Island Raiders are unbeaten this season in the Battle of the Gulf Cluster.



Doomadgee Dragons and Normanton Stingers men's teams.





# Imalu break premiership drought



Imalu Tigers celebrate their drought-breaking win.

By JACKSON CLARK



IMALU have broken a 12-year premiership drought, claiming a hard-fought victory in the Tiwi Islands Football League grand final.

The Tigers downed the previously unbeaten Muluwurri Magpies, 14.10 (94) to 12.6 (78), in front of a packed and passionate crowd at Stanley Tipiloura Oval in Wurrumiyanga.

Star forward Cecil Puruntatameri delivered a forward-line masterclass, kicking seven goals and taking home the Brother Pye Medal as best on ground in a dominant display.

The grand final lived up to its billing from the first bounce, with both sides trading blows in a high-tempo opening quarter that ended all square with four goals each.

Muluwurri started the second term strongly, slotting three quick goals to open up a handy buffer, but the Tigers steadied late to cut the margin to just seven points at half-time.

Imalu then took control in the premiership quarter, outscoring the Magpies three goals to one to edge ahead by 11 points at the final change.

An early goal to Puruntatameri extended the lead to 17 before Muluwurri clawed back to within a goal, setting up a tense finish.

But the Tigers would not be denied, kicking the final two goals of the game to seal a memorable 16-point win.

When the final siren sounded, jubilant Imalu supporters flooded the ground to celebrate with players and coaches – a moment of pure emotion after more than a decade between flags.

Premiership-winning coach Bradley Rioli reflected on the significance of the moment, the resilience of his side, and the influence of his late uncle, Willie Rioli Sr, who last led the Tigers to a flag in 2012.

"Muluwurri, they beat us three times this year – they blew us away every second half of those three games – I'm surprised the boys just hung in there," Rioli told the ABC post-match.

"When the players and supporters ran out on the field, I just thought, 'What is going on?' I couldn't believe it but it seemed to be true.

"It's been 12 years since my uncle Willie Rioli coached the Imalu Tigers undefeated that year and I was his assistant.

"It's pretty amazing to win this one (for) my uncle Willie – I learned a lot from him."

Adding another layer of family pride, the Imalu side was captained by Rioli's son Brayden, younger brother of Richmond triple-premiership star Daniel Rioli.

In the women's decider earlier in the day, Muluwurri finished their season in style, claiming a convincing 50-point win over Walama.

It was the Moreen show, with Hilda Moreen bagging four goals and Arthurina Moreen starring to take home the best-on-ground medal.

The Tiwi Islands Football League grand final is the biggest event on the local tourism calendar, with thousands enjoying an afternoon that combines thrilling footy with vibrant art and rich cultural displays.

## How can we support the victims of racism?

Are we looking at another lump to be pushed under the racism carpet at AFL House? Or will we see the AFL stand strong and support Port Adelaide's Jase Burgoyne and St Kilda's Nasiah Wanganeen-Milera in their stand, against their alleged racial abusers? It's been seven days at the time of writing this article since we have heard anything about what is happening to support them.

Of course, we have had our usual club statement, which other than reassuring the player they are in a culturally safe space at clubland, or that a box has been ticked, nothing has changed at a societal level.

Everyone is numb to the condemnation by AFL leaders at clubland and

headquarters, these words mean nothing, because there have been no actions to support these empty words.

Time after time we hear them and see nothing.

In fact, racism is on the rise and it is out of control, so what we are doing isn't working well enough – for my liking anyway.

Jase and Nasiah deserve to go to their workplace, which yes is a football field, and be culturally and physically safe. Rule changes and consequences keep them physically safe, majority of the time. When someone breaks the rules and their safety is in jeopardy, the consequences that follow are severe and we rarely see a repeat of the behaviour in modern football.

It's time that consequences for on and off field racism are no longer a sorry and a handshake, we need consequences of the legal kind. As a teacher I advocate for education but it's time for legal consequences, people will stop for their own self preservation and that suits me just fine.

I'm also not saying that Jase and Nasiah have to be the ones who battle this in courts. It is completely their choice, but they must be provided the option of legal support from the AFL and/or their clubs. They need to know they will go the distance for them.

If Jase and Nasiah choose not to go forward with legal action and it is their choice, not talked out of it, by people who misuse their power and privilege, then at a minimum the AFL should enforce personal consequences for the people who choose to be racist, ranging from lifetime to five-year bans from attending games and cultural education to be able to return to games.

These players need to know that the AFL know and support that racism is illegal in this country and has been since 1975 and online since 2021 and the impacts of racism of people's health and wellbeing are lifelong.

I wrap my arms around Jase and Nasiah and I hope you do too. Ask yourself how can you support these two? What is your sphere of influence? Real change needs to happen and people power is the answer.



Shelley Ware

## Tremendously Tamika

By PETER ARGENT



DESPITE her team finishing at the bottom of the ladder, sixth in the South Australian Women's Country (Aussie Rules) Football championships

held at Memorial Oval in Port Pirie on Friday, July 11 and Saturday, July 12, Indigenous football talent Tamika Reid was the leading goal kicker of the championships.

She shared that title with Maddie Nuss from the title-winning Eastern side.

Reid, who hails from Port Augusta and plays football two hours away in the Barossa, Light and Gawler women's competition, was also selected in the Team of the Championships on the full forward line as well.

In the opening game on Friday night, Reid kicked all four goals for the Northern girls as they went down to



Tamika Reid in action.

Grand Finalists, Eyre Peninsula 4.2 (26) to 7.4 (46).

She snaffled a pair of majors in the second game on Saturday morning and then the final match in the fifth versus sixth play-off where Reid kicked another three goals.

Earlier this year she played in the Northern Areas Football Association, Mid North Women's Football League, kicking 14 goals from six games playing for the Central Augusta side.

She was also an excellent performer in a couple of Perry Cup games against Broken Hill and Whyalla in late March.

This year, she's also been travelling down to play in the Barossa, Light and Gawler football league women's senior competition.

Reid is donning the red, white and blue with the Barossa District Bulldogs where she is the competition's leading goal kicker, currently having kicked 32 majors across nine games

This has included a brilliant 10-goal haul against Gawler Central in the round six June 1 game

Her goal kicking exploits included double figure bags for the Port Augusta Dingoes in the Spencer Gulf Women's football league last season.

She kicked a haul of 11 goals against the West Whyalla Dragons in September 2024 and a couple of weeks later against Weeroona Bay delivered a 13-goal performance.



# Danika's aiming for the AFLW

By JACKSON CLARK



**CENTRAL** Australian talent Danika McDonald has her sights firmly set on this year's AFLW Draft, determined to turn her dream into reality.

Regarded as one of the top Indigenous prospects in the 2025 draft crop, the athletic 18-year-old has showcased her abilities across multiple levels of football this year.

McDonald has plied her trade at local level with St Marys in the Northern Territory Football League and with her home club Pioneer in the Central Australian Football League.

At representative level, she has impressed with strong performances for the Northern Territory Academy in the Coates Talent League and for the Allies in the U18 Championships.

"I want to get drafted, that's my main goal," McDonald told AFL.com.au.

"As a smaller goal, I want to get my 2km time trial up (and) the skill I want to work on most is contested marking.

"I prefer to bring it to ground, but now I'm working on my body

positioning, to be able to take that mark."

McDonald stands at 175cm and is most often deployed as a tall defender, trusted to match up on the opposition's most dangerous forward.

Her ability to read the play and take intercept marks is a hallmark of her game, complemented by a reliable long kick and an appetite for finding plenty of the ball.

McDonald's versatility has also been on display, having swung forward on occasions and providing a target inside 50, as she showed with a five-goal performance in the CAFL in May.

The Alice Springs product first picked up a football in 2017 after trying her hand at gymnastics and rugby.

"I did gymnastics and rugby, but none of that stood out to me, then I made the transition over to footy, my uncles had been playing first," she said.

"One day he randomly decided he wanted to teach me how to kick a footy, so I guess it went from there."

McDonald said sharing her footy journey with friends – and playing in front of family – makes the game

special for her.

"A few of my friends were playing, so I wanted to be around my friends a bit more. I loved being able to spend time with my friends outside of school and the opportunity to make more new friends, I loved it," she said.

"Playing footy in Alice – I guess it means a lot more. You're versing your family and friends, people you've been around for years, and I just really enjoy it."

Playing across three different climates this season – Darwin, Alice Springs and Melbourne – has forced McDonald to adapt her preparation to suit each environment.

"I've gotten used to the weather in Alice Springs, we have cold weather and it gets to 15.

"When we have the games up in Darwin, it's like 30 degrees heat, humidity, then coming down to Melbourne where you don't even know what the weather's going to be.

"One minute it's sun, then the next minute it's raining – it's a really big difference, and it makes a big difference in the footy as well, adjusting your body to the weather."

The AFLW Draft will be held on Monday, December 15.



Danika McDonald has the AFLW firmly in her sights.

## Living the dream



Bronwyn Davey of the Demons handballs during a match between the Melbourne Demons and the Western Bulldogs at Melbourne Cricket Ground back in 2013 in Melbourne, Australia. (Getty Images)

By JACKSON CLARK



**AT** an age when many footballers have long since hung up their boots, Bronwyn Davey is still lacing hers up and playing the game she has loved for as long as she can remember.

Earlier this year, the women's football pioneer notched an incredible career milestone, reaching 250 combined games across the AFLW, SANFLW, NTFL and SAAFL.

For Davey, reaching 250 games is less about the number and more about the journey itself, and the people she has met along the way.

"Yes, 250 (games) is a milestone, especially in women's footy, however 250 for me is just another day playing the sport I

love," she told the *Koori Mail*.

"Win, lose, or draw, it's always been about the enjoyment, the lifelong friendships, the teammates who become family, and the love for the game that keeps me coming back."

Davey was a late starter to football, beginning her career aged 27 due to the limited opportunities on offer for women to play the game.

Instead, her weekends as a girl were spent cheering on her brothers Aaron and Alwyn, both of whom went on to have AFL careers.

"Coming from a footy family, I had longed to play the sport for as long as I can remember, but back then, female footy simply wasn't an option," she said.

"So when the opportunity finally came, I grabbed it quickly and never looked back.

"I'm incredibly grateful to

Aaron, who pushed me to nominate for the 2013 Women's AFL curtain raiser for Melbourne Demons – it was through that moment that I became the first ever draftee under the brother-sister rule, an honour I'll always cherish."

### Surreal

Davey described the experience of running out on the iconic MCG for the AFLW's inaugural match between Melbourne and the Western Bulldogs as 'surreal'.

"Back then, very few women had that kind of opportunity and even now, access to those moments is still limited for many.

"It was more than just a game; it was history in the making, and I'm proud to have been part of it."

Davey has seen firsthand the progression that women's football has had since 2013.

She continued her playing career across various football leagues and became a member of three premiership-winning teams: Greenacres, SMOSH Westlakes and with Alkamilya in Central Australia.

Davey would also eventually turn to coaching, where she led the Adelaide Crows' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Female Academy.

"I'm absolutely proud of how far women's footy has come," she said.

"When I first started playing 19 years ago in the South Australian Women's League, we only had 4 teams, now there is 5 divisions with 6 or more teams in each division.

"Being involved not only as a player but also as a coach, I can honestly say the future of AFLW is incredibly bright."

Among her proudest moments

was creating history in 2019 when she lined up alongside her daughter Tesharna in a SANFLW match for Woodville West Torrens, becoming the first mother-daughter duo to do so.

"At the top of my list: Getting to play footy with all three of my daughters," she reflected.

"I never imagined this would be possible in my lifetime, but it happened, and I'll forever cherish it."

Davey says it is her desire to guide the next generation that keeps her going.

"I just love the game as well as being passionate about sharing my knowledge with the next generation, especially young women stepping into the sport for the first time, as well as those already on their journey.

"Whether it's guiding others or just getting to play the sport with my daughters."



# Group offers more than sport

By JACKSON CLARK



IN the very remote community of Nauiyu (Daly River), a community-led men's group was formed through the Daly River Buffaloes Football Club in response to community health needs and priorities.

The group is governed with local leadership from Elders, emerging leaders, and local organisations, with ongoing support from the Green River Aboriginal Corporation and remote service providers.

John Bonson, President of the Daly River Buffaloes and Nauiyu Men's Group facilitator has been instrumental in the group's growth.

"It was a whole-of-community approach," Mr Bonson told the *Koori Mail*.

"We saw the need for a space where men could come together, not just to play sport, but to support one another emotionally, culturally, and spiritually."

From an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective, social and emotional wellbeing encompasses deep connections to community, culture, body, spirit, spirituality, ancestors, Country, family, kinship, mind, and emotions.

The Nauiyu Men's Group reflects this holistic view, providing a safe, weekly space where men can gather, share food, and talk openly.

Men's group participant Alastair emphasised the message of communication and trust to the group.

"Communication and trust. Trust each other. If you're having problems at home or in the community, come to the men's group and talk in private, with that trust. Sort your anger out, for you, the community and for yourself at home," Alastair said.

Fellow men's group participant Aaron said in times of conflict or grief, the group has



## Nauiyu Men's Group: The community-led initiative strengthening social and emotional wellbeing through sport, culture and connection



helped hold the community together.

"[The Nauiyu men's group] helps bring back everyone – it doesn't matter who's in the right or wrong. Some days you need to learn to forgive and forget; look forward and not look back."

In February 2025, the men's group was a space for successful "peace talks" between community members embroiled in conflict, which is

now celebrated by local men.

Men's group participant Adam said the initiative united people together.

"We've been through hard times. They just had to get together again and start up this footy club. This brings most of the people together as one community."

The group's strong cohesion has also enabled meaningful partnerships with service

providers such as Red Dust and teamHEALTH. These collaborations have supported on-Country excursions – one of the most cherished and healing aspects of the group's activities.

"I just love going out bush... it frees your mind, going on-Country. Less stress on the shoulders out bush, listening to nothing but the birds," Men's group participant Aaron said.

In addition to its community-

led activities, the group has also been contributing to a research partnership with Flinders University using an Aboriginal Participatory Action Research (APAR) approach. Through yarning sessions, deep listening, and shared decision-making, the Nauiyu Men's Group is helping to shape culturally relevant strategies for improving wellbeing in remote communities.

The project team led by Associate Professor Kootsy Canuto (Chief Investigator), Cameron Stokes (Program Manager) and Bryce Brickley (Research Fellow), has worked alongside the group, under the guidance of local men's leadership.

"It's been so fantastic to see the amazing power of sports settings and spaces to bring men together," Dr Brickley said.

Dr Brickley is Sports Settings and Spaces Lead of the FHMRI Health Equity Impact Program.

"The men already have the knowledge and leadership. It's been a privilege to be invited to spend time and connect with the men and help to document and strengthen what they're doing."

With ongoing support from the NT Primary Health Network, the Nauiyu Men's Group continues to grow as a vital space for healing, connection, and hope, facilitated by Mamulbak.

Building on the men's leadership, a community-led women's group has emerged, supported by Mamulbak and CatholicCare NT.

With the men's group now funded into the future, the Daly River Buffaloes Football Club has lodged an application to join the NTFL Division 2 competition for the 2025-26 season.

This move will enable the men to continue engaging in men's group activities – such as on-Country excursions during the Dry Season – while also fulfilling cultural obligations and maintaining strong connections to Country, community, and sport year-round.

# Young Broncos enjoy some island time

By ALF WILSON



YOUNG Brisbane Broncos stars Ezra Mam and Gehamat Shibasaki were popular with locals when they visited Thursday Island and there to greet them was Queensland Premier David Crisafulli.

Both Ezra and Gehamat have many relatives in the Torres Strait and Ezra's mother Tomasina lives on Hammond Island.

Ezra has both Aboriginal and Torres Strait descent.

Queensland State of Origin hero Gehamat has numerous relatives on TI including his much loved grandmother LJ Shibasaki.

Ezra has been shining for the

Broncos since returning to the field after serving a suspension and the side had won their last five matches in a row.

The pair was able to visit TI because the Broncos had a bye in the NRL round which commenced on the night they arrived.

Ezra and Gehamat landed at Horn island airport on the afternoon of July 17 and stayed on TI at the Grand Hotel until July 20.

They got to catch up with family and friends, do some fishing, visit schools and conduct coaching clinics for Zenadth Kes juniors.

A visit to the Nursing Home for the Aged on TI was also an integral part of their journey.

Mr Crisafulli is a keen rugby league fan who grew up in Ingham where the code is the major sport.

He also loves the Brisbane

Broncos and the Queensland Origin side and won a bet with the NSW Premier Chris Minns after the Maroons took out the series 3-1.

It was the NSW Premier who posted the challenge on social media following the state's game-one win, saying the "losing premier" would appear in a tourism ad for the winning state.

Mr Crisafulli quickly accepted the challenge in a video posted to social media.

"Get ready to hear Chris Minns tell the world how amazing Queensland tourism is," he said.

Also there to meet Ezra and Gehamat with the Premier was Mr George Nona the Chairperson for the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA).

George is a former champion Torres Strait rugby league player.



Queensland Premier David Crisafulli, (middle) with Ezra Mam to his left, and Gehamat Shibasaki on his right. TSRA Chairman George Nona is left of Ezra.



# Our boys soared but still the Lions roared



A SPIRITED First Nations and Pasifika outfit have provided a blueprint for the Wallabies with a

barnstorming effort to almost take down the unbeaten British and Irish Lions.

The historic selection delivered a passionate and combative performance at Melbourne's Marvel Stadium to shock the touring party, but ultimately fell just short in losing 24-19.

Skipper Kurtley Beale, a 95-Test Wallabies veteran, said his team showed the aggression needed for Australia to get on top of the Lions to level the series.

"You need to take it to them head on," the 36-year-old said.

"There were patches there where we had the momentum and the Lions were taking a back step and it created opportunities for us.

"These boys, they love the physicality, and I think playing rugby, you need physicality to lay the platform for your backs to play off."

Representing First Nations, Fiji, the Cook Islands, Tonga, Samoa and Maori cultures, the invitational side held the unbeaten Lions to 14-14 at halftime and were unlucky not to score a third on the bell.

Hard-hitting lock Lukhan Salakaia-Loto again gave Wallabies coach Joe Schmidt a timely reminder of his value ahead of the second Test at the MCG, while prop Taniela Tupou was also rock solid in the scrum.

The First Nations and Pasifika side were on the back foot early and the signs looked ominous when NSW Waratahs winger Tristan Reilly was given a yellow-card for his tackle on debutant Darcy Graham.

With Owen Farrell captaining the Lions for the first time, the visitors crossed in the seventh minute when a Fin Smith chip kick bounced up for centre Jamie Osborne.

They doubled that score in the 10th minute when halfback Ben White fired a pass out to Graham, but the shattered Scotsman's night, and potentially tour, ended soon after with a leg injury.

The invitational side also had an early casualty, with Wallabies outside back Filippo Daugunu suffering a head knock while making a tackle.

Coach Toutai Kefu's men put the visitors on the back foot with their rushing defence and breakdown ferocity, with flanker Charlie Gamble a stand-out to be named man of the match.

Reilly made amends for his early absence when he intercepted a long Lions pass to score his team's first try before Queensland flanker Seru Uru planted the ball next to the post in the 22nd minute to lock up the scoreline.

The four-nations outfit edged



Kurtley Beale restarts the contest with a drop kick. Pictures: Peter Argent.

ahead in the 44th minute with Osborne bagging his second, but the home side refused to buckle despite having to call on an inexperienced bench including 21-year-old Canberra club player Jarrah McLeod.

Farrell set up his team's fourth try, dummied and offloading for Duhan van der Merwe and it looked like the Lions would kick away.

However Melbourne product Rob Leota put his team back in the hunt with a 70th minute try to reduce the margin to five points.

First Nations and Pasifika continued to scrap for the match-winner but the Lions managed to hold on to keep their unbeaten record intact.

Relieved Lions coach Andy Farrell said his team strayed from their game plan after taking the early lead.

"I thought, 14 points up and finding space everywhere we started to play the game a little bit like an exhibition match and it was never going to be like that," he said.

"I was pretty pleased with how we redressed that at halftime and started showing some proper intent in our game ... delighted to keep the Ws (wins) rolling."

— AAP



Young gun Jarrah McLeod – the Yuin man – displays his dancing feet.





Andy Muirhead, Harrison Goddard, Matt Sonter (team manager), Jarrah McLeod, Triston Reilly, Kyle Oates, Kurtley Beale and Marley Pearce – the historic inaugural Indigenous players and staff from the game.

# FNP eager for a rematch

By **PETER ARGENT**



SIX players with Indigenous heritage played in the initial First Nations and Pasifika XV (FNP) rugby union clash against the British and Irish Lions at Marvel Stadium, each proudly representing their respective Mobs.

The team was captained by the legendary Kurtley Beale at centre, who won 95 caps for the Wallabies, and included Andy Muirhead and Triston Reilly in the started XV as outside backs.

The trio of Marley Pearce, Jarrah McLeod and Harrison Goddard were on the bench.

A seventh player, Kyle Oates was an emergency for the contest, which proved a ferocious and high-class affair.

After conceding the first 14 points of the game, Triston Reilly made FNP history by scoring the first try in this team's opening game.

His brilliant intercept saw Reilly pick off a Blair Kinghorn pass to score.

That was a personal highlight from a good all-round performance by Reilly, after coming back from being sin binned.

By half time FNP had levelled the score and the match was up for grabs.

In the end they fell short of what would've been an incredible upset win over the British and Irish Lions, losing 24-19 in

Melbourne, on Tuesday, July 22.

The contest was played in front of a healthy crowd of 30,420.

"(I'm)really proud of the boys," Beale said in a post-game interview.

"It was a really special week, this week.

"We came out and did what we said we'd do, take it to the Lions.

"It's an amazing concept, let's hope it can continue.

"It's a great platform for all the First Nations and Pasifika boys to aspire to this jersey."

Lions coach Andy Farrell was complimentary of his opposition, in one of the closest matches on tour so far, saying "We gave ourselves a bit of a fright."

"Congratulations to the First Nations and Pasifika team, that's some effort from those boys.

"They were physical and they made it a hard-fought contest."

The seven First Nations players in the FNP squad for this unique contest were:

**Kurtley Beale – Darug**  
**Triston Reilly – Dunghutti & Wiradjuri**  
**Marley Pearce – Wardandi & Noongar**  
**Jarrah McLeod – Yuin**  
**Andy Muirhead – Barunggami**  
**Kyle Oates – Nunukul, Ngughi, Goenpul**  
**Harrison Goddard – Darug and Murawar**



The 23s swap jerseys – British and Irish Lion Gary Ringrose and FNP player Jarrah McLeod.



Andy Muirhead kicking for touch.



Jarrah McLeod crashes through a British and Irish Lions tackle during the second half.



Triston Reilly on his way to scoring the initial FNP try.



Veteran rugby union great Kurtley Beale and his kids.





## Summer with the NBA

By PETER ARGENT



WILLIAM "Davo" Hickey and Biwali Bayles are two First Nations lads taking the next steps in their emerging international basketball careers.

Each have a strong connection to the Redfern area in Sydney and the Sydney Comets Basketball program.

Both are off the American National Basketball Association (NBA) Summer League.

"Davo" Hickey has signed on with the Chicago Bulls," CEO of the Sydney Comets, NBL1 East program and a significant basketball talent in his own right, Ben Madgen, explained to the *Koori Mail*.

"His journey is something very special.

"He is a proud Wiradjuri and Gomeroi man who came up through our Comets junior system, won an NBL title with the Illawarra Hawks earlier this year, and then came straight back to give everything for us in NBL1 East.

"He's a competitor, a leader, and just an all-around great person.

"The chance to suit up for an NBA

team is a massive moment for him and a huge credit to the work he's put in.

"Biwali Bayles is also off to Vegas, joining the New York Knicks' Summer League squad. "He has been on fire across the past two seasons, putting up nearly 30 points a game and doing it with that mix of flair, toughness and control.

"He's also come off a very successful professional season in Switzerland and now is chasing that next level.

"A player who has worked on his craft and a heart and soul at Comet, we couldn't be happier for him."

Hickey, now 26, and entering the sweet spot in his career, is a 194cm guard, who in 2024 won the NBL1 East Defensive Player of the Year and was selected NBL1 East All-Star Five.

In March last year, Hickey helped the Australia 3x3 team win gold at the FIBA 3x3 Asia Cup, and just this month he was named in the Boomers national squad for the Asian qualifiers.

Bayles was a part of the Sydney Kings program when they won back-to-back championships in 2022-23, and at 185cm can play point and shooting guard roles.

He also played American College basketball in Hawaii in 2020 and 2021.



William "Davo" Hickey, above, has signed on with the Chicago Bulls for the Summer League while Biwali Bayles, right, will join the New York Knicks' Summer League squad.



Images courtesy Sydney Comets.

## Bowland hat-trick

By PETER ARGENT



SCOTT Boland has become the 10th Australian man to take a Test hat-trick.

The game has been played at this level for more than 140 years and Boland achieved this special accolade during his team's 176-run win in the third Test against the West Indies in Jamaica on July 14, 2025.

His heritage was through the Gulidjan tribe and he is now the inaugural First Nations cricketer to collect three wickets in consecutive deliveries at the top level of the men's game.

In the second innings the West Indies were bundled out for just 27, the second lowest innings score in Test history, behind New Zealand's 26 against England back in 1995.

Boland, after returning to the side for the third Test of this series at the expense of off-spinner Nathan Lyon and



Scott 'The Hat-Trickster' Boland!

after also taking three first innings scalps, cleaned up the tail to win the series, 3-0.

He wrote his slice of history

initially with Justin Greaves wicket, caught by Beau Webster from the first ball of his second over, the 14th of



Teammates surround Australia's Scott Boland after he took the wicket of West Indies' Jomel Warrican to complete a hat-trick on day three of the third Test match in Jamaica on 14 July, 2025.

the innings. The next ball, Boland had Shamar Joseph out for LBW, and to complete the hat-trick, he clean bowled Jomel Warrican.

### Fairytale debut

Interestingly Boland has only played 14 of Australia's 39 Tests since his fairytale 2021 debut against England where he won "Man of the Match" honours, which included that fabulous innings haul of 6/7.

Now 36, he was born on April 11, 1989, Boland has collected 62 scalps, with a single five-wicket innings haul and also a 10-wicket match haul in his Test career so far.

He has the seventh-best bowling average in Test history with 16.53, and the best of any bowler in the past 100 years.

This includes the three other Australian Test quicks,

Player of the Series in the West Indies Mitch Starc, Josh Hazlewood and national Test skipper Patrick Cummins.

Each of that trio have over 300 test scalps, which has made it harder for Boland to receive opportunities at the top level.

The previous Test hat-trick by an Australia was Peter Siddle in Brisbane, back in the Ashes Test during the 2008-09 series.

Others in this special club include Glenn McGrath (2000), Shane Warne and Damien Flemming (both 1994), Merv Hughes (1988 – over two innings), Lindsay Kline (1958).

Jimmy Matthews did it twice in 1912, while Hugh Trumble achieved the feat in 1904 and 1902, while the legendary Fred "The Demon" Spofforth was the first man to accomplish a hat-trick back in 1879.