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Elimatta

WINTER 2013

Aboriginal Support Group – Manly Warringah Pittwater

ASG acknowledges the Guringai People, the traditional owners of the lands and the waters of this area

GET REAL – Empowers students to make safe choices

A Mildura Aboriginal Corporation (MAC) initiative is building young people's confidence to make safe life choices.

Twelve Mildura Primary School students were the first to take part in the program, designed to protect them and their peers from the risks of alcohol and drug problems in the future.

MAC's Raelene Stephens said it was important to address the issue early in life and give them the strength and courage to say *no*.

"You need to get to them before they slip into the bad habits and before they have those influences," she said.

"Because drugs are out there, they're going to be offered drugs and I think they need to be able to make the right choices and advise their friends of the same."

Ms Stephens said the school chose the pilot group members based on their leadership potential.

She said they would spread the messages learned over the five-week program to their classmates and help discourage them from trying drugs.

"It's been wonderful to see growing self-assurance in the children who've been involved," she said. "There's a real mix of children from various backgrounds, some Aboriginal, some non-Aboriginal, but right across the board we have noticed a positive change."

Lauren Roden – 23 March 2013



Prepared: Mildura Primary School students Sosefa Tupou, Shaborn, Paisley and Caleb Williams, age 12, have participated in the MAC program.

Being Aboriginal is a reason to succeed rather than an excuse not to

– Athol Boney

AUSTRALIA'S FIRST ABORIGINAL AMBASSADOR



Damien Miller has been announced as the head of Australia's delegation to the Embassy in Denmark, making him the first Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person to be appointed as an Australian ambassador.

Mr Miller, a *Gangulu* man from Mount Morgan in Queensland, is expected to take up his appointment in May. He was recently deputy head of mission at the Australian Embassy in Germany and is a career officer

with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. He has previously served with the Australian High Commission in Malaysia. Mr Miller holds a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws from the University of New South Wales and a Graduate Diploma in Foreign Affairs and Trade from Monash University. While still at high school in Brisbane, he was named *1993 Aboriginal Scholar of the Year* by the National NAIDOC Committee. As Ambassador to Denmark, Mr Miller will also have responsibility for international relations with Norway and Iceland.

*Koori Mail – Wednesday April 3 2013
Photo courtesy DFAT*

Be advised – this Newsletter contains images of Aboriginal people who have passed away



Australia's parliament recognises Indigenous peoples as first inhabitants

Australian lawmakers have passed a new law that recognises its indigenous population as the continent's original inhabitants. Prime Minister Julia Gillard called on parliament to put the issue to a referendum vote.

The House of Representatives approved the bill in a unanimous vote on Wednesday, giving the nearly 500,000 indigenous Australians legal recognition as the nation's first inhabitants. Prime Minister Julia Gillard stressed the importance of gaining national support for an amendment to the constitution in order to continue the healing process, calling earlier work toward improving the population's rights *incomplete*.

"Among the 128 sections of the constitution, there is no acknowledgement of Australia's first peoples. No mention of their dispossession, their proud and ancient cultures, their profound connection to the land or the unhealed wound that even now lies open at the heart of our national story," Gillard said before parliament.

Opposition Liberal Party leader Tony Abbott also expressed his party's support for the decision.

"We need to atone for the omissions and for the hardness of heart of our forebears, to enable us all to embrace the future as a united people," Abbott said.

Referendum foreseen

While the legislation, entitled The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Recognition Bill, is expected to also gain approval in the upper chamber the Senate, Australians must vote in a referendum to amend the constitution.

A referendum has not yet been scheduled, as it is reportedly unknown whether the proposal would garner a majority among Australian voters. Nevertheless, the prime minister appeared optimistic that indigenous Australians would not have to wait much longer for an amendment.

"I do believe the community is willing to embrace the justice of this campaign because Australians understand that indigenous culture and history are a source of pride for us all," Gillard said.

The new legislation on Wednesday coincided nearly to the day with the fifth anniversary of the government's first official apology to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

In 2008, former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd apologised on behalf of the government for past mistreatment of the indigenous peoples. His speech acknowledged the wrongs perpetrated repeatedly that followed soon after the arrival of the first British settlers in 1788.

Rudd also apologised for the forced removal of children from their families in the 20th century, when the Australian government attempted to *assimilate* an estimated 100,000 children by placing them in orphanages or with white foster parents.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Peoples were first recognised as full citizens by the Australian government in 1967.

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_Legislation/Bills_Search_Results/Result?bld=r4943

Aboriginal flag to fly permanently in Cowra

A *Wiradjuri* woman says a Cowra Shire Council decision to permanently fly the Aboriginal flag in town will strengthen the ties between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

Local elder, Neville *Chappy* Williams will raise the flag, near the town's Peace Bell in a special ceremony later this morning, where it will fly alongside the Cowra Council flag.

Wiradjuri woman Robyn Coffey says there is genuine excitement in the community about the gesture.

She says it is an important step in continuing the reconciliation process. "It's very good that it's a permanent thing and it's always going to be flown, because it does acknowledge *Wiradjuri* heritage and flying the flag, it's just another step forward in strengthening the ties really in the community, and the wider community as well," she said.

The Cowra Council also recently amended its Aboriginal Consultation Policy to acknowledge that decisions made about the land should be done with

respect to the interest of the local Indigenous community.

Ms Coffey says a choir of young Aboriginal girls will sing a special welcome song in *Wiradjuri*, prior to the flag raising ceremony.

"The community as a whole has really come together and the Aboriginal people are feeling like they're always included and are a very important part of *Wiradjuri* country here," she said. "We don't feel as a community it's a token gesture. We feel it's a genuine reconciliation movement."



\$12M Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park rebuilds steams ahead – Nick Dalton March 27 2013 © The Cairns Post

Two members of the traditional land owners of the land on which the \$12 million upgrade of the Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park is taking place have joined the construction crew.

Park chief executive officer Geoff Olson said Bryant Cairns had won the contract for the early works stage of the year-long project and had offered employment to the traditional owners, the *Djabugay* people, with the construction team.

“Bryant engages with traditional owners and takes pride in promoting employment opportunities and skills development in the communities it works in,” he said.

Bryant indigenous partnership manager Jason Smith visited the traditional owners at Kuranda to discuss employment opportunities and received overwhelming interest from the community.

“We have two *Djabugay* men starting this week and we are going to create opportunities for local indigenous businesses and individuals to join our team as we roll out construction over the next eight weeks,” he said.

“This gives these men the opportunity to gain valuable experience on a working site and see if they are interested in construction work, with the aim of assisting them to choose a pathway in the industry.”

“Bryant started a similar program in Yarrabah late last year where we now have five apprentices/trainees and we have worked throughout the indigenous communities in Cape York Peninsula, including building the recently opened Lockhart River police station and courthouse.”

The first two workers Carl Brim and Ruben Nolan said they were pleased to be on the job.

Mr Olson said careful planning had gone into staging the redevelopment so that Tjapukai could remain open and continue to offer cultural experiences from different areas of the park’s extensive grounds at Caravonica.

“This first stage will involve revitalising Tjapukai’s Cultural Village where guests are given hands-on experiences with the likes of bush tucker, didgeridoos and basket weaving,” he said.

“The Dance Theatre is being completely rebuilt and will reopen in May with a new show just one of the new products designed to transform Tjapukai into Australia’s leading venue to experience Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.”

“The second stage will involve the main building to incorporate theatres and new displays.”



ABORIGINES SET FOR RECOGNITION IN SA – AAP March 6 2013

Changes to recognise Aboriginal people in the South Australian constitution have been passed by state parliament’s lower house.

The legislation recognises Aboriginal people as the traditional owners and occupants of the land and acknowledges the injustice of their dispossession. It also formally records an apology to the *Stolen Generation* and will now go before the upper house for debate.

Premier Jay Weatherill said yesterday the bill would correct the record and give hope to Aboriginal South Australians. “All South Australians can be proud of what we are doing to achieve greater reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people,” he said.

Aboriginal Affairs Minister Ian Hunter said the changes showed appropriate respect to the state’s first peoples and allowed current and future generations to take their rightful place in the community.



Photo courtesy *Reconciliation Australia* – thanks to Wayne Quilliam Photography for this great shot.

Aunty Shirley – what a wonderful mentor and woman!



A LONG BATTLE WON: KOONGARRA ADDED TO KAKADU

– Clare Rawlinson February 6 2013



A long battle for protection of the sacred Koongarra area near Kakadu was today won, when traditional owner Jeffrey Lee watched as Federal Parliament moved to include it in Kakadu National Park.

Former Prime Minister Bob Hawke sat with Mr Lee in Parliament as the bill was moved, making the Koongarra area forever protected from mining.

Mr Lee had fought for many years to protect the area from uranium mining, turning down millions of dollars in potential mining compensation for access to the uranium deposit for which he is the traditional owner.

“Koongarra was a big long struggle for me and as a traditional owner, and a long road,” Mr Lee said outside Parliament House this morning.

“Finally I’m here and like I said, this is my day.”

He said he can now relax with the relief of knowing he no longer has the battle to carry on his shoulders.

“This has been a very long and difficult struggle for me. I have gone through a lot of trouble and heartache and waited a long time to see this day. However, the fact that I am here today proves that if you are true to your culture and to your land one day you will win.”

Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke said protection for Koongarra was a win for traditional owners as well as international tourists.

“International and Australian visitors would be horrified if mining were to occur within sight of Kakadu’s magnificent rock art galleries and stunning bush walks at Nourlangie Rock,” he said.

“Koongarra will have the full protection of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999 and as part of Kakadu, mining will be prohibited forever. This historic moment is testament to the untiring work of traditional owner Jeffrey Lee, who has fought for years to preserve his country for future generations. We are proud to honour the wishes of the land’s traditional owners and to protect one of Australia’s most magnificent national parks for our children and grandchildren.”

The Koongarra area covers around 1,228 hectares of land near the existing borders of Kakadu National Park, near the Nourlangie rock site.

Djok traditional owner Jeffrey Lee has fought for protection from mining for Koongarra for many years. (ABC TV - ABC)

ABBOTT VOWS TO ENGAGE WITH ABORIGINES

Tony Abbott says a coalition government would have a *new engagement* with Indigenous affairs, including constitutional recognition of Aboriginal people as the first Australians.

Speaking in Sydney, Mr Abbott said indigenous affairs will be a priority and focus for a coalition government if it’s elected to govern at September’s federal election.

“I want a new engagement with Aboriginal people to be one of the hallmarks of an incoming coalition government – and this will start from day one,” he told a Sydney Institute function.

Mr Abbott said in the first 12 months of taking office the coalition would seek bipartisan support to amend the constitution to acknowledge indigenous Australians.

“An acknowledgment of Aboriginal people as the first Australians would complete our constitution rather than change it,” he told the audience, which included NSW Premier Barry O’Farrell and indigenous leader Warren Mundine.

Mr Abbott said a constitutional amendment meant people would know that Aboriginal people “will never be regarded as just a historical footnote to modern Australia”.

“Done well, such an amendment could be a unifying and liberating moment,” he said.

He also said a coalition government would handle indigenous affairs within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

“This means that along with Nigel Scullion as minister, there will be, in effect, a prime minister for Aboriginal affairs,” Mr Abbott said.

He committed to address “deep disadvantage” in Indigenous Australia by visiting remote Aboriginal communities each year, as well as by getting doctors and teachers to take longer postings in communities.

A coalition government would also expand an Indigenous job program to fund job-training trials developed by Andrew Forrest and Warren Mundine, he said.

Mr Abbott promised there were “better days to come” for Indigenous affairs.

“Should the coalition win the election, Aboriginal people will be at the heart of a new government, in word and in deed,” Mr Abbott said.

Earlier on Friday, Mr Abbott adopted the words of former Labor Prime Minister Paul Keating, saying the state of Indigenous Australians constitutes a “stain on our soul”.

“We certainly have to do it better in the future than we have done it in the past,” he told ABC radio.



ADAM GILES KEEN TO TRANSFORM THE NORTH

– Amos Aikman, Northern Correspondent *The Australian* March 16 2013

Australia's first Indigenous head of government is the son of a labour union activist who, through his hardscrabble upbringing and time in the bureaucracy, decided there can be no progress in indigenous affairs without a move away from the *socialism that's killing Aboriginal people*, towards a focus on developing economic opportunity.

He believes everyday work does not detract from culture and that Aboriginal people *don't want to be kept in museums*. His first-hand experience of disadvantage cuts deep and he recognises the pain its "hidden demons" can cause. He is proud of his heritage but does not want to be defined by it, rejecting the politics of separation in favour of seeing indigenous people defined as Australians first.

He is a better communicator and a stronger leader than the man he replaced in an unsightly coup this week. His friends say he's the right person to lead the Northern Territory; his enemies demur, arguing he's a ruthless undermine who helped bring a new government to its knees just seven months after taking office, in a bid to take power for himself.

"Our future in the Northern Territory is about jobs, jobs, jobs, not welfare, welfare, welfare," Chief Minister Adam Giles says.

It's a simple sentiment, but behind it lies a bold ambition to develop Australia's disadvantaged heart through infrastructure investment, welfare reform and changes to land access and *trade barrier* permit arrangements.

Giles would like to see basic goods manufactured in remote areas by people in welfare-subsidised private sector jobs, those goods shipped to hub cities such as Darwin and onwards to Asia. It's a dream so far removed from the morbid reality of so many indigenous settlements as to be almost beyond comprehension. But Giles argues everything begins with hope.

Giles was born to an indigenous father from northern NSW and a non-indigenous mother from the Sydney suburb of Cronulla. His paternal grandmother was an Aboriginal woman born in NSW's Pilliga Scrub, and his maternal grandfather ran the first *Retravisation* store in the Sydney suburb of Rockdale.

He grew up in the NSW Blue Mountains, first with only his mother after his parents split, and then with her and his stepfather, Jim Giles, whose name he took.

"Not having enough sheets of toilet paper on the roll and the soap being too small was my introduction to politics, as Dad and I sat around the dinner table and he detailed why he would have to go on strike tomorrow," Giles said in his maiden speech to the Territory's legislative assembly. He joked his father would be "turning in his grave" to know his son was now a conservative.

At school, Giles was one of only a few indigenous children. He suffered taunts such *coon* and *boong*,

Northern Territory Chief Minister Adam Giles, right, with Deputy Chief Minister Dave Tollner.

Picture: Facebook



but was never evicted from *the pack*. One of his Indigenous schoolmates committed suicide in jail aged 17, an experience that marked him.

"It made me realise the demons of disadvantage are there, even though sometimes you can't see them," Giles says.

Name-calling and another memorable encounter, in which a woman crossed the road in fear to avoid a bunch of blacks, fostered an early sense that Aboriginal people should not be treated differently.

Giles studied accounting and real estate, and got his first job in real estate by *knocking on the door and offering to work for free*. Later he was employed in the public housing sector, working in the welfare-dependent suburbs of western Sydney. He saw guns and violence, and developed the view that enclaves of disadvantage breed further pain and trouble.

"When people break out of public housing and the welfare cycle, you can see things turn around," he says.

"We have to get private sector housing in Aboriginal communities," he adds.

His first marriage was short-lived, but while working in Melbourne for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission in about 2002 his second wife helped to set up *The National Indigenous Times*, which she still part-owns. The pair later moved to Canberra, where Giles joined John Howard's Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. During consultations across the country for the government's ATSI review, Giles says, he saw that *welfare and socialism are what's killing Aboriginal people*.

He cut his political teeth in a failed bid as a Liberal candidate for the ACT seat of Fraser, then followed his journalist wife to Alice Springs. There, while working for the federal government, he says his suspicions about the failure of welfare's *mutual obligation* were utterly confirmed: "I saw people continuing to get welfare without being asked to go to training or work or anything."

In 2007, Giles suffered defeat again after running a *no more sit-down money* campaign as a Country Liberals candidate in a bid to unseat federal Labor's Warren Snowdon from his vast electorate of Lingiari. But a year later he entered the Territory parliament with a convincing victory in the Alice Springs seat of Braitling.

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ADAM GILES KEEN TO TRANSFORM THE NORTH

Giles was effective in opposition, developing relationships in his party, with business and the media that helped him build profile and influence. He says his party's former leader, Terry Mills, lost his support long before leading the CLP into government last August. Giles says Mills is a good bloke but was an ineffective leader.

Giles has strong support in the party branches and is friendly with local media. Between August and this week, Giles and his new deputy, Dave Tollner, aided by their factional allies, waged a persistent campaign to unseat Mills. Last week, Mills and two influential Aboriginal MPs told The Australian Giles and Tollner were making more trouble for the government than the opposition.

"I've been agitating for a change in our leadership

style, our governance style, the way that we communicate with electors, for a long time, for many years," Giles says. He has now told his factional colleagues to "lay your guns down", promising a new approach. Giles's admirers use words such as *smart* and *talented* to describe him; his foes prefer terms such as *ruthless* and *seeditious*.

His first media appearances have gone well, and he is already exerting a firmer hand on his colleagues than Mills. The latter's struggle to enforce discipline and to communicate effectively contributed to his demise.

Some fear Giles lacks the experience to bring an unpopular, debt-laden and hitherto divided CLP government back from the brink, but he seems sure of himself. Leaving his office yesterday, Giles quipped: "I think I've taken this job for at least four years."

Ballina man to be Australia's first Indigenous shooter

– Mitchell Craig *Northern Star*



Ballina rifleman Damien Webb has been earmarked to become the first Indigenous shooter to represent Australia.

The prediction comes from five-time national champion John Radford, who competes at a number of events around Australia with Webb.

"He has an excellent sportsman attitude and I think it's something he can do," Radford said. "Like a lot of Indigenous athletes he's a natural and can just about do anything he sets his mind to."

Webb, 40, has been in the sport for only a couple of years and regularly shoots in events with current and former national champions. He competes in the Queensland Cup and won gold on both days at an event in Brisbane earlier this month. Webb finished with an impressive 596.45 (out of 600.60) on the first day and 598.46 on the second.

Representing Australia is something the handy marksman and keen fisherman would love to do.

"Hopefully I keep going well and it's something to look forward to," Webb said. "It's been talked about and my aim is to finish in the top five at nationals this year. I'm not getting any younger and some of the kids coming through help keep me on my toes."

Webb has had a busy 12 months and recently acquired a custom-made Grunig and Elmiger Racer rifle from Switzerland. He will compete in the target rifle benchrest competition at the nationals in April.

"It's been plenty of time on the trigger and hundreds of kilometres on the road," Webb said.

Radford believes Webb is a pioneer in the sport and a role model for the Indigenous community. "He's been a real shining light and hopefully he can attract some other blokes to the sport," Radford said.

"Not all Indigenous men have the talent to play footy and this is a great alternative."

Falcon woman young Aboriginal Student of the Year

– inmycommunity.com.au April 17 2013

A young Falcon woman has won Challenger Institute of Technology's *Aboriginal Student of the Year Award*.

Ashley Dadliffe (22) received the award at Challenger Institute's Student Awards Ceremony in Fremantle.

The ceremony recognised the achievements of more than 70 students, as well as five major award winners in the categories *Apprentice of the Year*, *Trainee of the Year*, *Vocational Student of the Year*, *VET in Schools Student of the Year* and *Aboriginal Student of the Year*.

As part of a Certificate IV in Business, Ms Dadliffe completed a Challenger traineeship at NidjallaWaangan Mia, an Aboriginal health and wellbeing centre in Mandurah.

She said working as a receptionist at the health centre had taught her to interact well with customers with diverse health and social needs.

"Doing my course as a trainee has given me the chance to develop my skills on a daily basis, which reinforces my learning," she said.

"Being a young Aboriginal woman, working in a health centre has made me aware of the problems facing Aboriginal people, but it has also made me aware of the government initiatives to help Aboriginals."

Ms Dadliffe said her goal was to raise awareness among Aboriginal people of the health programs they could access and the reasons why they should.

"If I can help any Aboriginal person increase their life expectancy and enjoy a better quality of life, I think I have helped my community," she said.



River motif flows through Aboriginal health clinic

– Stephen Crafti *The Age* February 13 2013

The Rumbalara Aboriginal Health Clinic at Mooroopna (two kilometres west of Shepparton) for the Indigenous community has few of the traditional hallmarks. There is no signage, and the only reference to the Aboriginal people using this facility are the markings of gum leaves embedded in the concrete facade by artist Lyn Thorpe. The same outlines are found in the slump glass surrounding the entrance.

“We wanted to identify the building without using Western-style signage,” says architect Steven Cortese, design director of Baldasso Cortese Architects, who worked closely with senior design architect Dev Mistry.

The new building, which forms a link to others on the site, was inspired by the Barmah Forest on the Murray River, where the indigenous community originally came from. However, the Goulburn River and its cracking river bank was also instrumental in shaping the clinic’s form. “We wanted this design to have a strong connection to the earth, as well as the adjacent forest,” says Cortese, who appreciated that the rivers provide not only food, but a source of spiritual cleansing for the community. The forest also provides protection from the elements.

Baldasso Cortese Architects’ selection of materials suggests the natural river topography and nearby forest. The concrete panelled facade, for example, is stained in an ochre red hue and embossed with timber grain. Timber also features in the glazed entrance, suggesting tree trunks. And the dramatic roof, clad in fibro-cement sheeting, offers protection from the sun, like the nearby tree canopy. To minimise sun from the west, the architects included a series of elongated windows.

While cracks, such as on the riverbank, do not feature in the new structure, Baldasso Cortese’s design comprises five separate units, linked by an impressive



foyer. Irregular in shape, with corridors taking in the forest views beyond, the *whole* becomes stronger than the individual parts. “We also saw this building as part of a larger master plan, with the foyer being integral to future spaces,” says Mistry. “All the components [enclosed spaces] are organic in shape. There are almost no right angles.”

Unlike the medical rooms, which have been renovated in the older buildings, this latest addition is primarily used for dental treatment. As well as consulting rooms, there are an administration area, staff kitchen and amenities. And although each consulting suite offers a different view of the surrounding forest, one of the most impressive aspects is within the lobby. As well as a series of orchestrated sight lines through the clinic, there is a beautifully crafted faceted ceiling made from plywood. “We wanted to create texture and depth to the interior, not dissimilar to the surface found in a river bed,” says Mistry.

The Rumbalara Health Clinic sits comfortably with the adjacent buildings from the 1970s.

Indigenous four off to Oxford, Cambridge – Lisa Martin *AAP* April 10 2013

Four young indigenous future movers and shakers have won scholarships to prestigious English universities Oxford and Cambridge.

Vincent Backhaus from Queensland, Sarah Lynn Rees from Tasmania, Rex Betar and Leila Smith both from NSW have been awarded Charlie Perkins Scholarships, named in the memory of the first Indigenous man to graduate from university.

Mr Betar is Oxford-bound to study a Master of Business Administration and plans to work in corporate strategy before moving into federal politics in the longer term. “I really want to make social change, so I think why not go to the top of the tree,” he told *AAP*.

Growing up in Tweed Heads, Mr Betar said he had some big challenges as a youngster and that education was key to a better life. “I was in a wheelchair until I was 12-years-old, I was born with cerebral palsy,” he said.

“None of my family had finished high school before and there often wasn’t food on the table.”

But Mr Betar was a *precocious child* and decided at age seven that he wanted to go to Oxford.

Ms Lynn Rees will study architecture at Cambridge.

The builder’s daughter says she grew up with a woodshed in the back yard and *the smell of timber*.

“I love creativity, problem solving and art and this is a way I can mix them altogether,” she said.

She wants to become a qualified architect when she returns to Australia and put some indigenous flavour into design work.

“I’m interested in the concept of nomadic housing,” Ms Lynn Rees said, adding there are only seven indigenous architects registered in Australia.

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Indigenous four off to Oxford, Cambridge

Mr Backhaus, from Cairns, will use his scholarship to study psychology and education, but has a tough decision to make having been accepted into both Cambridge and Oxford universities.

"It's a bit nerve wracking," he said.

Mr Backhaus wants to work with Indigenous youth and help them with transitions at high school and building resilience.

Leila Smith will study public policy at Cambridge, to build on her decade's work in Indigenous health.

At the moment she's working for the Indigenous Doctors Association in policy development.

The scholarships are valued at more than \$50,000 per year and include tuition fees and living expenses.

British High Commissioner to Australia Paul Madden hosted a special morning tea for the scholarship recipients in Canberra. The scholarships are jointly support by the Australian and British governments and Rio Tinto.

Four new Aboriginal childcare agencies endorsed in NSW

The New South Wales government has endorsed four new Aboriginal child care agencies for out-of-home care, in a step towards transferring services from the government to community organisations.

The Minister for Family and Community Services, Pru Goward, presented certificates enabling four new Aboriginal organisations to care for Indigenous children, bringing the total number in the state to ten. "It's a historic day for Aboriginal families, and in particular Aboriginal children," said Ms Goward.

The new agencies are located in Western Sydney, Coffs Harbour, the Illawarra and Hunter regions.

Angela Webb from the NSW Aboriginal Child, Support and Community Care, says the process of obtaining accreditation was difficult but rewarding. "I feel so proud to go through this process, to successfully come out and know they're going to have Aboriginal kids being looked after by Aboriginal carers in their own community, that's really inspiring," she said.

One such carer is Rhonda Cruse-Rawiri, who has been a carer for the last 14 years, raising five of her own children. She said that there is an important bond between Aboriginal children and their carers. "It's really heartbreaking that kids go out into the community and are [staying] with non-Aboriginal carers, and grow up not knowing who their mob are," Ms Cruse-Rawiri said.

6,000 NSW children in care are Indigenous, but only 700 have Indigenous carers. The aim is to have 841 places for Indigenous children in 24 organisations.

The announcement is a step towards moving out-of-home care services from state control to the non-government sector. It is expected that such transfer will be completed by 2017.

FORMER WA MP ERNIE BRIDGE DIES AGED 76



Mr Bridge was the first Indigenous Australian to become a cabinet minister in any Australian government.

He was a stockman and a country music performer before serving in the Labor government of Brian Burke from 1986 as minister for water resources, the North West and Aboriginal affairs.

In 1993, Ernie received the Medal of the *Order of Australia* in recognition of service to the WA Parliament and to Aboriginal affairs.

Former ministerial colleague Jim McGinty says Mr Bridge was a popular figure on both sides of politics. "He was a general, all-round good bloke and loved by both sides of politics," Mr McGinty said. "I remember one occasion in Parliament when he got out his guitar and sang a song in the Parliament to make a particular point about the speech he was giving at the time. You can't help but love people like that. He didn't have a mean bone in his body.

Recently diagnosed with mesothelioma, Ernie Bridge has died at the age of 76.

He was suing the State Government and two of Australia's richest women, Gina Rinehart and Angela Wright, after being diagnosed with the condition.

Mr Bridge believed he was exposed to asbestos fibres and dust while he was the minister responsible for withdrawing government services from the town of Wittenoom in the late 1980s.

His daughter Cheryl posted on her social networking page that her father passed away yesterday afternoon. "I have been blessed to have the most beautiful mum and dad in the world and have made it possible for me, my daughters and family and the Western Australian public to have the most amazing life," she wrote. "There are far too many things I could say but I have one word: grateful. RIP Dad and thanks for being the most amazing father, so generous and loving.

There are far too many things I could say but I have one word: grateful. RIP Dad and thanks for being the most amazing father, so generous and loving."

"I have so enjoyed living with you the past three years and caring for you the past 12 months through this illness. It has been the most enriching experience."

Mr Bridge was suing the Shire of Ashburton, CSR Limited, Midalco, Gina Rinehart's Hancock Prospecting and Angela Bennett's Wright Prospecting.

Law firm Slater and Gordon said Mr Bridge had lodged a writ in the Supreme Court seeking damages.

Mr Bridge is survived by his four children.



THE FIRST ABORIGINALS

Neville Bonner

First Indigenous Australian Parliamentarian. Bonner a *Jagera* man was convinced little would change for Indigenous Australians unless they were represented in parliament. He said, "You've got to get into the system, work through the system and make changes."



Bonner joined the Liberal Party and in 1971 was chosen to fill a Senate vacancy. He celebrated his first parliamentary speech with a boomerang throwing display on the lawns of Parliament House

Bonner was a Senator for 12 years and worked on Indigenous and social welfare issues. He did not always agree with his party's policies and several times crossed the floor and voted with the *Opposition*. Disillusioned with the way he had been treated, Bonner resigned from the Liberal Party in 1983 and ran for the Senate as an Independent but was unsuccessful. He retired from politics, but not from public life.

Bonner continued to raise awareness of Indigenous and welfare issues. He worked with Amnesty International, the Indigenous Advisory Council and other organisations to improve conditions for Indigenous people.

Bonner was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Griffith University, and, after his death in 1999, the Neville Bonner Memorial Scholarship was established by the Australian National University.

In 2004, the federal electorate of Bonner, in Queensland, was named in his honour.

Carol Martin

First Aboriginal woman to be elected to any Australian Federal, State or Territory Parliament having first been elected to that position in 2001. Carol was born in Perth, Western Australia



and completed a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work from Curtin University in 1993. Carol moved to Derby in the Kimberley region of northern Western Australia where she worked as a social worker and counsellor. Carol was elected as a Shire Councillor for Derby and the West Kimberley, and was a member of the National Association for Loss and Grief in Western Australia, and the Industry Training Advisory Board and a member of the Support Committee for Young Women's Health Wise. Carol was also responsible for the establishment of EMILY's List's Partnership for Equity Network, which is aimed at involving more Indigenous women in public life.

Linda Burney

First Aboriginal Australian to be elected to the NSW Parliament and a proud member of the *Wiradjuri nation*. Her commitment to Aboriginal issues spans more than 30 years. Was elected Member for Canterbury in 2003.



She began her career as a teacher in Western Sydney and spent many years working in education. In 2002 her expertise was formally recognised when she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Education from Charles Sturt University. Linda was the first Aboriginal graduate of this respected institution.

Linda has held senior leadership positions in the non-government sector and has represented Australia at various United Nations forums.

Sir Douglas Ralph Doug Nicholls

First Aboriginal person to receive a knighthood, Douglas Nicholls was born on the 9th of December 1906. He belonged to the Yorta Yorta tribe. He twice received Queen's Birthday honours for *distinguished services to the advancement of the Aboriginal people* to which he quipped that



MBE stood for *More Black than Ever*. He was further recognised in 1976 when he became the Governor of South Australia. Sir Douglas Nicholls died in 1988. He was given a state funeral attended by many who loved and respected him for his dedication to his people, and was buried at his beloved birthplace, Cummeragunja.

He became the first Aboriginal pastor of Church of Christ in Australia.

- 1957** Appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE).
- 1972** The first Aboriginal person to be knighted
- 1976** The first Aboriginal person appointed to vice-regal office. Appointed as the 28th Governor of South Australia
- 1977** Appointed a Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order (KCVO)
- 1991** The Canberra suburb of Nicholls was named after him.



National Sorry Day 2013 REMEMBRANCE WALK

Sunday 26 May 3pm



**Aboriginal Support Group
– Manly Warringah Pittwater**

ASG members and interested people of our community will meet at Berry Park Narrabeen where a *Welcome to Country* will be given and short talk, followed by a silent walk to the Scout Hall Bilarong Reserve, Wakehurst Parkway – a *journey of healing* to remember the *Stolen Generations*, the children and their families – and the meaning and repercussions of this to all Australians.

Upon arrival at the Scout Hall the walkers will be greeted with a cup of tea or cold drink and refreshment

The Day will be commemorated with:

- *Welcome to Country*
- Small hand out to all children
- Craft and Jewellery making for the children with a show at the end of the day with what they have created.
- A talk on the *Stolen Generations*
- Dancing by the Girls from Biala Aboriginal Hostel
- The *Mcminn* Aboriginal Dancers
- Local Aboriginal group *Bangaly*, Singing and didgeridoo playing – *Deadly!*
- The BBQ is going all the time and refreshment will be available throughout the afternoon
- The day concludes at about 5.30pm
- This is a FREE event
- The ASG-MWP does appreciate the support from Pittwater Council and the in kind support from Local Business with their support we can *Close the Gap*.

An opportunity for Aboriginal People and non-Aboriginal People to come together the way it should be.

TRIBAL WARRIOR AND LOCAL HERO SPEAKS AT ASG MEETING



Recipient of Australia's 2013 *Local Hero* award, Shane Phillips was our guest speaker at the recent ASG Meeting on March 11 and presented an excellent insight into the *Tribal Warrior* Mentor Program.

Shane is so *down to earth* and so *positive* – it is understandable why his early intervention project *Clean slate without prejudice* has been so successful in the Redfern community. Not only has crime in the area significantly reduced, but also the health of Indigenous youth involved has improved.

Shane spoke about his time on the old *Tribal Warrior* boat and of his trip up to Coffs Harbour where someone had taken the time to mentor and guide him – making it a journey that changed his life for the better.

What a lesson we can all learn.

It's people like Shane we need to *close the gap*. Sadly it would have all come to an end this month without funding – but as Shane said *the only way is forward and to stay positive*.

The good news is that three days after Shane's talk the Federal Government granted \$50,000 – this combined with an anonymous donation will keep the Mentor Program running for the next year.

The Tribal Warrior is a working business but the money from that enterprise has been supporting this program at the expense of other projects.

To read what *Tribal Warrior* are doing, or to help with a donation to a very deserving cause of empowering our Aboriginal youths please visit <http://tribalwarrior.org/get-involved.html>

Read more: <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/swing-and-a-miss-funding-gaps-hit-scheme-slashing-crime-rates-20130313-2g0l8.html#ixzz2NVY14BEp>

INDIGENOUS is a word that refers to Aboriginal People and Torres Strait Islander people



Follow us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Aboriginal-Support-Group-Manly-Warringah-Pittwater/224483234362452>

Guringai FESTIVAL 2013

Sun May 26

3pm - 6pm

Sorry Day

Scout Hall, Bilarong Reserve Wakehurst Pkwy, Nth Narrabeen
Free Event. Further details: Neil Evers 99993045

Mon May 27

7pm - 9.30pm

Secrets of our Aboriginal Past

Narrabeen Tramshed 1395A Pittwater Road, Narrabeen
Admission Free. Further details: Judith Bennett 9905-2135

Sun June 16

10am - 2pm

4 hour Bushwalk in Narrabeen

Starts at 27 Morgan Rd, Belrose
Admission Free. Bookings: Conny Harris 9451-3231

Wed June 19

10am - 12 noon

The Sapphires – Free screening – All welcome

Collaroy Cinema 1097 Pittwater Road, Collaroy
Further details: Neil Evers 99993045

Sunday June 23

10am - 2pm

Discovery Walk in Guringai Country

Muogamarra Nature Reserve, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park
Ku-ring-gai Chase Road, Mount Colah – Admission Free.
Further details: <http://guringaitours.com.au>

Wed June 26

5pm - 7pm

Art Exhibition – Peninsula Community of Schools

Collection of artworks reflecting the Guringai Festival,
Reconciliation and NAIDOC.

Wheeler Heights Public School – Admission Free

Further details: sharon.smithies@det.nsw.edu.au

Sat June 29

10.30am & 2pm

The Art of Shell Jewellery Making with Kerrie Kenton

Cost \$15pp. Plus *willy willy* making for kids \$5ea.

Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Road, Mona Vale

Further details: Clair Jackson 02 9913 9922

Fri 28 opens 6pm

Sat 29 & Sun 30

9am - 7pm

Northside Aboriginal Art & Craft Exhibition

Our first community exhibition on the Northern Beaches
– please come along – enjoy – and *buy!*

Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Road, Mona Vale

Admission Free. Further details: Clair Jackson 9913-9922

Sun June 30

1 & 3pm Sessions

Native Grass Weaving with Karleen Green

Learn how our native grasses are crafted into beautiful
and useful objects.

Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Road, Mona Vale

Session duration 1½ hours. (cost \$15pp)

Booking Essential: Neil Evers 02 9999 3045

Sun June 30

1 & 3pm Sessions

Bush Tucker of the First People of Australia

with two Aboriginal men Jess Relton and Les Mcloud.

Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Road, Mona Vale

Session duration 1½ hours. Free Admission

No Bookings Required.

Sun June 30

7pm - 9 pm

Bangaly (a Deadly Aboriginal Band)

Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Road, Mona Vale
A Free Event – Just be there!

Wed & Thur

July 3 - 4

After Dark Nature Tours at Shelly Beach Manly

See the darkness come alive like never before!

Special *Festival Offer* \$49pp. (Normally \$69)

Online bookings use code Guringai2013

More details: Jess Relton 0457 002 211

<http://afterdarknaturetours.com.au/>



Monday May 13
7.30pm start

ASG-MWP Information Night with Jeff McMullen and Graeme Mundine
What is really happening in the NT?
An evening not to be missed. Free Event – All Welcome.



Sunday May 26

SORRY DAY Remembrance Walk
Set this Day aside for a *journey of healing* to remember the *Stolen Generation*, their children and their families. Details page 10.



Monday May 27 to Monday June 3

Guringai Festival commences
See details of some highlights on page 11

Monday May 27

Reconciliation Week <http://www.reconciliation.org.au>

Monday Jun 10
7.30pm start

ASG-MWP Business Meeting – All members welcome.
Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Road, Mona Vale.

Friday Jun 28 Sat 29 & Sun 30
9am - 7pm

Northside Aboriginal Art & Craft Exhibition – Free Event
Our first community exhibition on the Northern Beaches.
Official opening Friday 6pm – please come along – enjoy – and *buy!*
Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Road, Mona Vale
Further details: Clair Jackson



Sunday Jul 7-14

NAIDOC WEEK 2013
The theme is: We value the vision: Yirrkala Bark Petitions 1963

Monday Jul 8
7.30pm start

ASG-MWP Information Night – Free Event – All Welcome.
Aunty Fran Bodkin Talks about - Aboriginal Science
Aboriginal Story's stories are recognised as a science
Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Road, Mona Vale.



Monday Aug 12
7.30pm start

ASG-MWP Business Meeting – All ASG members welcome.
Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Road, Mona Vale.

Monday Sep 9
7.30pm start

ASG-MWP Information Night – Free Event – All Welcome.
Guest Speaker: Glen Klatovski
From the National Kimberley campaigner for the Wilderness Society
Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Road, Mona Vale.



ASG-MWP would like to thank Dee Why RSL, Pittwater RSL, Forestville RSL Pittwater Council and Warringah Council for their continued support in 2013



RSL CLUB



PITTWATER COUNCIL



Warringah Council

An Invitation to join us

**Aboriginal Support Group
Manly Warringah Pittwater**

Founded 1979

Membership is \$25 per year

(02) 9913 7940 (02) 9982 1685

P.O. Box 129 NARRABEEN NSW 2101

www.asgmwp.net

Elimatta is the newsletter of the Aboriginal Support Group Manly Warringah Pittwater.

Articles are welcome with the understanding that editorial changes may be made and that contributors agree that the material will be archived by the National Library of Australia.

Contributors to **Elimatta** are from many different cultures and backgrounds. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editors or members of the ASG.

Please email articles where possible to the_elimatta@gmail.com

If you use any of the material it would be appreciated if the extract is set in context and the source acknowledged.



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