

Elimatta

Aboriginal Support Group - Manly Warringah Pittwater

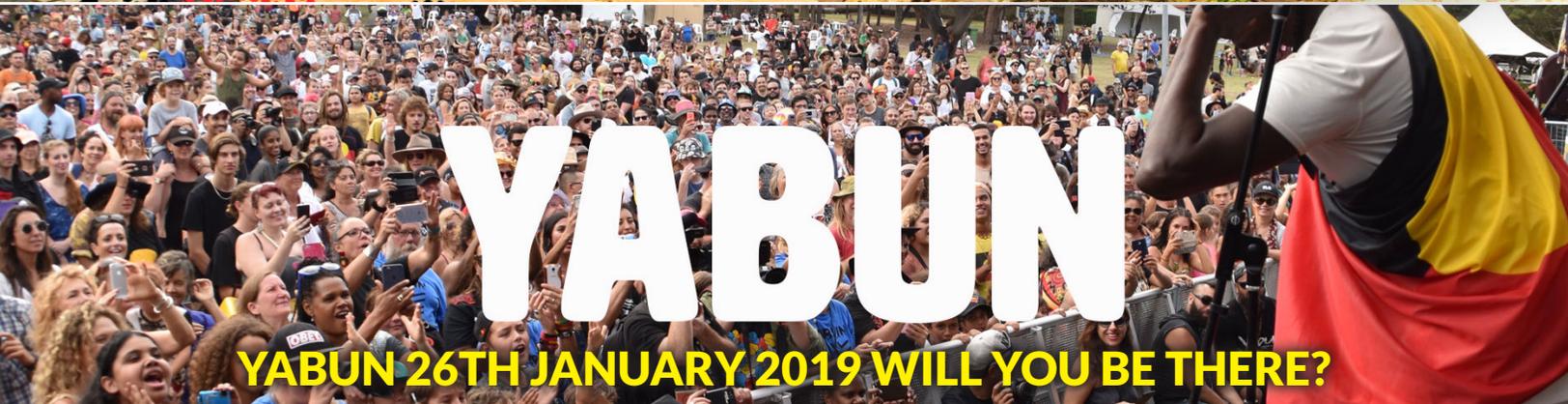
NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2018



BENNELONG
GRAVESITE SAVED



BONITA MABO
MOTHER OF NATIVE TITLE



YABUN 26TH JANUARY 2019 WILL YOU BE THERE?

BONITA MABO

Mother of Native Title

INDIGENOUS activist Dr Ernestine 'Bonita' Mabo AO has been remembered as the 'mother of native title' and 'matriarch of reconciliation'

BONITA MABO, Prominent Indigenous and South Sea Islander rights activist Bonita Mabo has died days after receiving accolade. Mabo was the wife of Eddie Mabo and worked alongside him in the pursuit of Indigenous land rights. Just days ago she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from James Cook University for her contribution to social justice and human rights.

"It's a big loss for us all," Indigenous WA senator Patrick Dodson said.

"I think Australia needs to honour people like Mrs Mabo who stood, to some degree, in the shadows of her husband, but who was the backbone and the steel that helped he and many others to continue the struggles. "A person of great note; a great Australian and great contribution to the cause of justice to all. "It's a sad day. It's a big loss for all of us. But she is a person who comes in the vain of the very recent recognition that 'because of her, we can do things'."

In a statement, The Australian South Sea Islander Alliance said she would "be greatly missed".

"Aunty Bonita's contribution to social justice and human rights for First Nations People and the Australian South Sea Islander recognition was monumental and relentless," the statement read.

"A formidable 'Woman Tanna', Aunty Bonita will be greatly missed as Australia has lost one of the greatest matriarchs of all time."

We lost a great soul. She fought for our peoples and our rights, Aunty Bonita Mabo will be sorely missed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social justice

commissioner June Oscar remembered her as "the mother of native title".

"She was a woman of great strength. She was gentle, stoic and loving," Ms Oscar said in a statement.

"I will always remember her as the mother of native title. Her legacy lives on in our continuing fight for land and sea rights."

Indigenous education was a lifelong passion

Mabo was a Malanbarra woman and a descendant of Vanuatuan workers brought to Queensland to work on sugar plantations.

She was born near Ingham in North Queensland and married Eddie in 1959.

The couple had 10 children and Indigenous education became one of Mabo's lifelong passions.

Bonita Mabo has received one of James Cook University's highest awards, an Honorary Doctor of Letters, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the community. In the early 1970s, she set up Australia's first Aboriginal community school and worked as a teacher's aide.

"For black children ... we could see how they were ... they used to go to school and they'd get blamed for different things," she said in a 2013 interview.

"I used to go up to the school and I used to have arguments with the teachers and many times they cried and I didn't care because I'd said what I'd wanted to say."

The Black Community School started in Townsville with 10 students and two teachers who volunteered for half pay.

The school taught children to read and write, and Torres Strait Islander history and culture.

At its peak in the late 1970s, 45 students were enrolled at the school.

It closed in 1985 due to a lack of funding.

The Mabo decision

Eddie Mabo spent a decade fighting for official recognition of his people's ownership of Mer Island in the Torres Strait.

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Her husband did not live to see the result, but in 1992 Bonita Mabo was making her way from North Queensland to Canberra when the landmark decision was handed down.

In 2017, she recalled that moment.

"We were just outside of Sydney and we stopped and pulled up on the side of the road and Malita rang us and said 'dad won the decision, won the case,'" she said.

"And we just jumped out and we just hugged each other.

RIP Bonita Mabo. Eddie and Bonita's fight and victory remade our world & secured rights unimaginable for 200 years. Condolences to family and Mer Nations.

"We were proud as punch."

The Mabo case was legally significant in Australia because it ruled the lands of this continent were not "terra nullius" or "land belonging to no-one" when European settlement occurred.

It found the Meriam people, traditional owners of the Murray Islands, including the islands of Mer, Dauer and Waier, were "entitled against the whole world to possession" of the lands.

The case paved the way for the Native Title Act of 1993.

In an interview with the ABC in 2013, Mabo said she had to be there for her husband "all the way".

"Thick or thin, we made it," she said.

"[I was] disappointed he wasn't there ... for the judgement to come down early enough.

"But on his deathbed he knew and he kept saying: 'when I win the case, when I win the case'."

Recognising South Sea Islanders

In recent years, Mabo had been fighting for South Sea Islanders to be recognised in Australia as their own distinct ethnic group.

She was recognised in the Order of Australia in 2013 for "distinguished service to the Indigenous community and to human rights".

"I feel so honoured to be part of it," Mabo said at the time.

Mabo was often asked about her work with Eddie, but while speaking about the Order of Australia, she said she made sure to tell people: "Well, I've got another side too."

"I'm a South Sea Islander descendent. My great grandfather came from the Tanna Islands and was stolen out here ... to come and clean the country up here," she said.

"And well, when I start saying that, they sit up and listen."

Jackie Huggins, co-chair of the National Congress of Australia's First People's, said Mabo was "a mother to all of us in the political struggle".

"She left a legacy of great compassion, of being the woman who was behind Eddie Mabo, her husband, in his fight for justice and human rights," she said.

"She was also an activist in her own right.

"She was a great legend across this whole nation.

"Like her husband, her legacy will always live on."

ISABELLA HIGGINS

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS REPORTER

BENNELONG GRAVESITE SAVED

The grave site of legendary Aboriginal Bennelong has been saved by the purchase of the Putney house where he is believed to be buried by The NSW State Government.

The State Government will spend around \$3 million to purchase a Putney home that contains the gravesite of Aboriginal leader Bennelong and will turn the site into a memorial.

"Bennelong is the first significant connection between our two cultures and it is important that we protect and preserve this site as an important piece of our nation's history", Lane Cove MP Anthony Roberts said.

"Given its significance we need to make sure we are taking all the appropriate steps to ensure we manage the site in a way that is respectful and in line with community values.

"We need to make sure we are protecting our heritage and preserving the past."

A committee will be established to discuss the next steps for the site's future.

It will include representatives from the Aboriginal community, the Bennelong Putney Project Committee, the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Lands Council, DPE, OEH,

Aboriginal Affairs and local community.

The multi-million dollar purchase follows a campaign by The Weekly Times to create a memorial at the gravesite, which will include a dedication to commemorate the impact of British settlement on the Aboriginal people of Sydney.

A City of Ryde council meeting in April this year passed a motion to protect the grave and Mayor Jerome Laxale congratulated The Weekly Times and Mr Roberts.

"It is great that Council and The Weekly Times have been part of the project and we thank Mr Roberts for securing the funding," he said.

In April this year – in response to The Weekly Times' campaign – the City of Ryde passed a motion which stated: "The City of Ryde aims to progress further the investigation regarding the potential burial site in Putney and to progress any measures required to protect the site."

Bennelong died on January 3, 1813 at Kissing Point on the Parramatta River in Sydney and reports in the Sydney Gazette said he was buried in the Putney orchard of the brewer James Squire.

In March 2011 Dr Peter Mitchell of Macquarie



University announced that he had located Bennelong's grave between the home and parkland, prompting The Weekly Times and former Ryde Mayor Vic Tagg to launch the campaign to have the site recognised by a memorial.

The Weekly Times Managing Editor John F Booth AM said front page appeals to commemorate Bennelong had paid off.

"Since 2013 our readers have backed our bicentennial campaign to have a substantial memorial at the gravesite and Sunday's announcement recognises Bennelong's important contribution to the lo-

cal Federal electorate named after him," he said.

It is not known who is buried in a grave beside Bennelong although academics speculate that it could be local Aboriginal Nanberry, who died in 1821 and requested to be buried with Bennelong.

Bidgee Bidgee, who led the Kissing Point clan for twenty years after Bennelong's death also asked to be buried with Bennelong, but there is no proof his remains are buried there.

ANTHONY STAVRINOS
THE WEEKLY TIMES

WHY NEW ZEALAND'S MAORI DO BETTER THAN AUSTRALIA'S ABORIGINALS

When James Cook landed in Australia in 1770, Aboriginals had been there for about 60,000 years. Their 500 or so separate nations lacked kingpins or settled agriculture, so colonisers deemed the land terra nullius, free for the taking. Aboriginals were butchered or displaced, and later their children were stolen and placed in foster care under a cultural assimilation programme that lasted for six decades. They got the vote only in 1962. After a referendum five years later, they were included in the census. But not until 1992 did the high court recognise that they should have some claim over their land.

Even well-intentioned policies brought in more recently have failed them. When the law said they must be paid the same wage as other Australians for the same job, many were sacked. Billions of dollars are poured into programmes to help indigenous peoples every year, with mixed results. The decade-wide gap in life expectancy is getting wider. Though only 3% of the population, Aboriginals fill a quarter of Australia's

prison cells. Their young men have one of the highest suicide rates in the world. Their children are almost ten times more likely to be in state care.

In Broome, a tourist resort on Australia's north-western coast, groups hang out under trees, or drink on park benches. For a small town, it has a lot of police. "We operate in a kind of failed state," explains Peter Yu, head of the Yawuru Aboriginal Corporation, which represents Broome's pre-colonial owners. Some communities are afflicted by diseases which are almost unheard of outside the poor world, including trachoma, which can lead to blindness.

Part of the frustration of the Aboriginals stems from how small a say they have in their own affairs. Many of them want to amend the constitution to guarantee wider rights, enshrining a voice for the "first nations", as they are now more often known. But the conservative-led coalition government rejected their idea of a national representative body. Still, indigenous land rights have strengthened since a native title law was passed in 1994. Aboriginals hold title over 31% of the country, with rights to hunt and fish, and to negotiate over economic developments such as mining.

Some groups, like the Yawuru, have struck lucrative deals with the government. Their corporation is now the biggest private landowner in Broome, according to Mr Yu, with assets including a cattle station and a licence to export livestock. It has used the cash from compensation to revive local culture through language lessons and the promotion of ancestral "dreamtime" stories. But it is an exception. Native title rarely confers actual ownership. Neither does it permit a veto over projects. To extract compensation from mining companies, traditional owners are often required to "extinguish" their



title, which is anathema to those who view their land as sacred. Many Aboriginals therefore look with envy across the Tasman Sea, to the Maori. They remain at the bottom of New Zealand's pile, but still live longer and healthier lives than Aboriginals. New Zealanders who identify as Maori are 15% of the population of 5m. Their median weekly income of NZ\$900 (\$610) is almost double that of their Aboriginal counterparts. Although more than half of New Zealand's inmates are Maori, they are less likely to go to prison than Aboriginals.

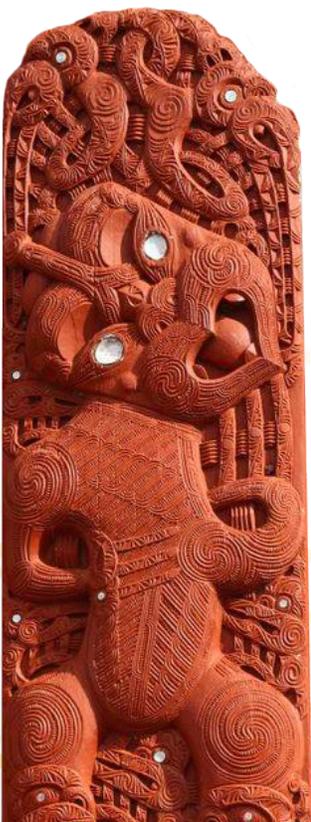
This relative success is partly a reflection of colonial history. British settlers reached New Zealand much later than Australia, found what they saw as a more civilised society, and signed a treaty with the Maori in 1843. It was routinely flouted but a tribunal established in 1975 has allowed the Maori to seek redress for historical abuses. But it also reflects the Maori themselves. They are a tight-knit group compared with Australia's distinct indigenous "nations". They formed a monarchy in order to unify against colonialists, and almost all speak the same language. Once near extinction, it is now taught in schools and spoken in Parliament (where the Maori have reserved seats). An illustrious list of leaders includes Winston Peters, the current deputy prime minister

and foreign minister. Three Maori have become archbishops and two governors-general.

Some 87 agreements have been struck between various tribes and the state in the past 30 years, helping them to lay the past to rest. Financial reimbursements can be stingy, but some have won large enough settlements to develop successful companies. The largest belongs to the Ngai Tahu, a people spanning most of the South Island, who own farms, fisheries and tourism ventures. TDB Advisory, a consultancy, values the assets of Maori "post-settlement entities" at NZ\$7.8bn, far more than Australia's entire indigenous economy.

The two countries' attitudes towards their indigenes could scarcely be more different. Mainstream Australians are still largely segregated from Aboriginals. New Zealanders tend to take more pride in their mixed heritage. Maori tattoos are ubiquitous in mainly white suburbs. Citizens of every hue glory in their country's domination of rugby (both the men's and women's teams are ranked top of the world). All purr with pride at the haka, a Maori war dance that precedes international matches.

THE ECONOMIST
THE KIWI MODEL



FIVE INDIGENOUS WOMEN JOIN LIST OF MEDICAL GRADUATES FROM UNIVERSITY OF WA



Kelly Langford, Tamisha King, Shauna Hill, Heather-Lynn Kessarís and Adriane Houghton.

If only Adriane Houghton's grandmother and great-grandfather could have been there on Tuesday to see her graduate as a doctor.

Just the thought of that on an already emotional occasion at the University of WA was enough to bring her to tears.

"Our grandmothers couldn't even be educated in Western schools," Dr Houghton said.

"My great-grandfather went to enrol my grandmother into school and he was told he wasn't allowed to because she was an Aboriginal.

"So he and five other Aboriginal men built a school for indigenous children."

A makeshift school in Port Hedland was the best those men could do.

Their hearts would have

swelled with pride if they saw the five indigenous women who graduated as doctors at UWA this week.

There have been 49 indigenous medical graduates from UWA, including Australia's first indigenous doctor, Helen Milroy, who graduated in 1983.

"We're the first doctors in our families," Dr Houghton said.

"My great-grandfather always said to my family — my mother, my grandmother — that education is the way out for us.

"And it is. We're so much better off now for our education."

By her own admission, Dr Houghton, 35, was far from a model student at high school.

She left school in Year 10 but decided to enrol in UWA's Aboriginal Orientation Course at 19.

A bachelor of science led to six years of work for Woodside in Karratha before she turned her attention to medicine.

She completed her doctor of medicine while raising two children as a single mother.

Dr Houghton said the five indigenous women drew on each other for strength during their studies. Along with fellow graduate Tamisha King, 24, she will start an internship at Royal Perth Hospital next month.

Again, like Dr King, her long-term goal is to use her expertise to give back to her community.

"Aboriginal culture instils in you a sense of obligation to your people," Dr Houghton said.

"Growing up you have to always give the front seat up, you always have to give money to people, you always have to cook and clean or give cups of tea to the older people. We have that strong sense of giving back."

Dr King, a Karajarri woman, would like to head north after her internship at RPH to do her

medical residency in Broome.

One day, she would like to help the people of Bidyadanga, her family's home community.

"We owe it (to our communities)," Dr King said. "We got the opportunities. We're so lucky.

"For our grandparents, for our parents, our aunts and uncles, it's the least we can do."

Dr King said she wanted other indigenous teenagers to know they could balance tertiary education with maintaining culture.

"I don't think it's so much that you have to sacrifice something to have an education or to do well at university," she said.

"You can have both. You just have to want it and you just have to work for it."

LIAM CROY
THE WEST AUSTRALIAN

SERIOUS ALLEGATIONS AGAINST WA ABORIGINAL TRUST OVER MILLIONS OF ROYALTIES DOLLARS

Serious allegations have been made surrounding a West Australian Aboriginal charitable trust that administers millions of dollars of mining royalties earmarked for relieving poverty, sickness, distress, misfortune and destitution.

The inquiry unveiled several areas of concern, including transactions involving motor vehicles, related companies and projects, and the remuneration of directors. CREDIT: JACKY GHOSSEIN

WA Attorney General John Quigley last year launched an inquiry into the Njamal People's Trust to investigate claims the disbursement of funds and management were not in line with the trust deed, and the 680-plus page report was tabled in parliament on Tuesday.

Inquirer Alan Sefton combed over the trust in detail, examining matters including its "family buckets" system of distributions.

He identified several areas of concern, including transactions involving motor vehicles, related companies and projects, and the remuneration of directors.

"A number of potential conflicts of interest were either not disclosed or were inadequately disclosed and recorded, or not adequately considered," Mr Sefton said.

He gave a raft of recommendations to reform the current legislation governing charitable trusts, including amending the act to empower the Supreme Court to remove a

trustee when it is satisfied that there has been misconduct or mismanagement.

Mr Quigley said further allegations regarding "people apparently acting in relation to the trust" had been brought to his attention after he received the report, which were very serious and had been referred to the Australian Securities and Investments Commission.

"I have been concerned for some time that some of the communities which these charitable trusts were designed to assist are still disadvantaged," Mr Quigley said.

"In some cases, it is difficult to see how the funds are being used to improve outcomes for our indigenous communities."

The inquiry was sparked by complaints in 2016 and 2017 by Sharon Westerman, who was removed from the board of Njamal Mining, which is wholly owned by the trust, amid allegations of mismanagement.

She has taken legal action against the company in the Supreme Court.

Separately, she is fighting five charges of stealing as a servant and is next due to face Perth Magistrates Court on February 11, 2019.

Due to the legal matters, the inquiry did not make any specific findings regarding Ms Westerman's actions in connection with Njamal Mining.



ART SCAM: COMPANY SWAMPS MARKET WITH ABORIGINAL PRODUCTS MADE IN INDONESIA

Boomerangs, didgeridoos and message stones featuring Aboriginal-style designs, but made in Indonesia have landed an Australian souvenir wholesaler in court.

A Federal Court judge this month found Birubi Art Pty Ltd to have made false or misleading representations that products it sold were made in Australia and hand painted by Aboriginal peoples, in breach of Australian Consumer Law.

Federal Court judge Melissa Perry is yet to rule on penalties.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, which took Birubi to court, said from July 2015 to November 2017 the company sold more than 18,000 boomerangs, bullroarers, didgeridoos and message stones to retail outlets around Australia.

Although the products featured designs associated with Australian Aboriginal art and words such as 'Aboriginal Art', 'genuine', and 'Australia', they were made in Indonesia, the ACCC said.

"It was unacceptable that Birubi

sold Indonesian-made products as having being hand painted by Australian Aboriginal persons when that was not the case," ACCC Commissioner Sarah Court said in a statement.

"The artwork, images and statements used by Birubi suggested a relationship between Australian Aboriginal people and the production of the products which did not exist."

"The ACCC is particularly concerned about any conduct that has the potential to undermine the integrity and value of genuine Indigenous Australian art, and consequently, the impact that could have on Indigenous Australian artists."

"The ACCC will not hesitate to take further action against traders who mislead consumers about the nature of their products, in order to ensure confidence in the Indigenous Australian art industry."

Birubi Art Pty Ltd operates as a wholesaler of approximately 1300 product lines to about 152 retail outlets across Australia, court documents show.



YABUN 26TH JANUARY 2019 WILL YOU BE THERE?



This article was published in the Indian daily last year (2018), went out to 50,000 people in Indian. Yabun 2018 - The Festive voice of protest.

January 26th of is of National importance to Australia as it is in India. The day is celebrated as Australia Day. It commemorates the hoisting of the Union Jack at Port Jackson in the year 1778, by Captain Arthur Philip; signalling the suzerainty of Britain over a new colony.

Every year, this official version of history is celebrated in all its glory as the national day with mind-blowing fireworks and other entertainment.

But, there is more to the history of this sparsely-populated continent. Yabun, the largest one day gathering of the Traditional Custodians of this land, marks a suppressed facet of history. Hosted in the traditional land of the Gadigal people in Sydney, on every January 26th, this 17-year-old tradition challenges the official commemorative version.

To the Aborigines, the National Day is a stark reminder of invasion and oppression. Thus Yabun, which means music to be beat in Gadigal language, is growing every year in its reach and participation as an alter event. It grows as a celebration of protest, challenging the colonial version of history. The mode of protest makes it all the more interesting. From tradi-

tional dances to performances of world famous aboriginal rappers; debates; marches; the festival leaves a mark with its diversity and life.

The Aboriginal people of Australia are the oldest civilization in the world, dating back its history to 60,000 years. The existence of a systemically organized social structure connected with totems and song lines, and its role in creating the largest estate in the world, called Australia is well established by modern science. The ancestors passed this knowledge through dreamtime, which prescribed the mores of the tribe. Thus they coexisted.

It is onto this idyllic island that in 1778 Captain Arthur Philip docked his fleet of 11 ships, with 568 male and 191 female convicts, some of their family and some 200 soldiers to keep order. He was the designated Governor of this brigand island named New South Wales, discovered earlier by Captain James Cook in 1770. He had clear mandate on how to deal with the natives: "You are to endeavour by every possible means to open an intercourse with the natives, and to conciliate their affections, enjoining all our subjects to live in amity and kindness with them."

But soon it became evident that the foreigners were in contest with the natives to gain possession over land. The Aborigines fought, but guns won the day. This victory ended in unjust oppression of

the conquered natives. While the National day hails the glory of this victory, Yabun challenges it as a festive voice of protest.

MILESTONES OF OPPRESSION

The convicts served their term as labourers. As emancipists, they constituted the strong working class of Australia. The ballads of these daring bush workers advertised Australia as a green pasture for the blokes. Squatters kept acquiring more land. So did their sheep which was introduced here turning the land into a wool industry. The sheep along with their masters destroyed the eco-system of the aboriginal Australia.

The ripples of great depression brought a lot of people from Southern Europe in search of employment. The potato famine in Ireland was another catalyst. With the gold rush in 1851, people started flowing in. The more the outsiders came in, more the natives were marginalized.

It is estimated that in the 19th century 20,000 indigenous people and 2,500 European died in conflicts over land. With natural sources of food and water cut off, by late nineteenth century, two-thirds of the Austrian Aboriginal population perished due to malnutrition and diseases spread by invaders.

In 1880s natives were corralled into Aboriginal Reserves, and provided petty provisions. These reserves became centres of op-

pression and slave labour. Wages in cash for aboriginal labour became a norm only in 1930s. Finally, in 1967, the constitution was amended to include the indigenous population in the national census. In summary, in 1962, a 200-year old invasive system offered citizenship to a 60,000-year old civilization, in their native land!

THE VOICES FROM 2018

Yabun, the festival of protest is growing in its size and voice every year. More than 50,000 people participated in this year's Yabun. Their demand to change the National day, and accept it as invasion day is gaining traction. Another strong demand is for a treaty over the land to be signed between the aboriginal people and the government. The biggest success of Yabun as a festive protest is that, as a platform for the voices of the traditional custodians of the land, it is becoming mightier year by year.

Hope to see you there 2019

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english.mathrubhumi.com/amp/features/specials/yabun-the-festive-voice-of-protest-1.2644333

facebook.com/YabunFestival/videos/145625786783102

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NSW COUNCIL FINED FOR DESTROYING CULTURALLY SIGNIFICANT ABORIGINAL SCAR TREE

A northern New South Wales council has been fined \$300,000 for destroying a scar tree sacred to the local Gumbaynggirr people.

The fine was issued to Clarence Valley Council on Friday by the New South Wales Land and Environment Court for the offence of harming an object that it knew was an Aboriginal object.

The ruling marks the end of a saga which began in 2013, when the council lopped the top of the culturally-modified tree, exacerbating a decline in the tree's health.

Until then, the tree had stood for hundreds of years on what is now the intersection of Breimba and Dovedale streets in suburban Grafton.

Thought to be either a red bean or black bean tree, it had scarring on two parts. A scar measuring 1.4 metres tall faced a south westerly direction, while a smaller scar faced a westerly direction and was higher up the trunk.

The scar tree was registered as a culturally-modified tree on the Aboriginal Site Register in 1995, making it an offence to harm or desecrate the object.

Despite the tree's protected status, it ended up on a council list for tree removal, and on May 19, 2016, was completely removed.

The next day, after the council realised what had happened, it self-reported to the Office of Environment and Heritage.

Scar tree has deep roots in Aboriginal culture

Aboriginal Elders said the scar tree was culturally significant to the Gumbaynggirr people, with various reasons passed down by the knowledge holders to local Aboriginal people.

Roger Duroux, an elder of the Gumbaynggirr and Bundjalung tribes, said a male Elder told him three decades ago that "the scarring was made by our people ... using a stone axe".

"I was told by the Elder that the tree was special and that it was possibly a "light tree" or floating tree which means that the bark could have been used to float on

water for a specific purpose," he said.

"I was told that the cuts could also have been made by someone wanting to make a shield

Brett Tibbett, a local Gumbaynggirr man, said he was told in 2005 or 2006 by an Elder and then chairperson of the Grafton Ngerrie Local Aboriginal Land Council, David Daley, that the tree was a marker for the Aboriginal population in the area.

"This means the tree was used as a directional tree for visitors directing them to an area now known as Fisher Park," he said.

"Fisher Park was traditionally a location where the Aboriginal population could get fresh water from a billabong and was also a meeting place and trading area.

"This scarred tree was significant in that it was used and is linked to other areas of cultural significance."

Heartbreak after tree's removal
When Mr Duroux drove past the stump that was once a culturally significant and protected scar tree, he was heartbroken.

"I could not believe what the workmen had done," he said.

"I slowed down to a stop in my car to look at it and someone beeped their horn at me. It didn't matter. I felt immediate loss and sadness.

"I said 'there goes another bit of our history and culture that has just been taken away and for no reason — it's gone forever'."

Mr Tibbett said he was upset and disappointed to hear what had happened to the tree.

"The tree was an important link to our community and culture," he said.

"There are not many places within the Grafton town boundary where you can go and visit a significant cultural object that pre-dates European settlement.

"The loss of this tree is irreplaceable and there was only one of its kind."

Lisa Southgate, who recorded the tree to protect it, said she was shocked and saddened to learn what had happened.

"Aboriginal objects such as this are



Photo: Aboriginal elders say the scarring was made using a stone axe either as a directional marker directing visitors to nearby Fisher Park, or for ceremonial purposes. (Supplied: Alexandra Simpson, Office of Environment and Heritage.)

extremely important to the Aboriginal community as they provide a link between the present and the past and people's ongoing links to the culture and landscape," she said.

The Land and Environment Court heard the council was aware the tree was a protected Aboriginal object after it received a penalty notice in 2013 for lopping parts of the tree.

The council's director of Works and Civil Troy Anderson said he believed the offence was committed "as a consequence of a failure by the council to properly implement approved procedures" and "the failure by staff members to follow existing directions concerning the removal of trees".

In handing down its sentence, the Land and Environment Court acknowledged the council's "genuine remorse" and its acceptance

of responsibility at the earliest stage.

Justice Brian John Preston cited a motion and letter of apology, in which the council "unreservedly" apologised and expressed its "extreme remorse".

The council was fined \$300,000, which would be given to the Grafton Ngerrie Local Aboriginal Land Council.

The money will fund research into local Aboriginal cultural heritage to celebrate Aboriginal culture and promote reconciliation, and a feasibility study into a keeping place for Aboriginal cultural heritage items in the Grafton area.

LEAH WHITE AND HANNAH ROSS
ABC NORTH COAST

BEACHES LINK TOLLWAY CONSTRUCTION THREATENS TO DESTROY ANCIENT ABORIGINAL ROCK ART

The Beaches Link tollway will damage ancient Aboriginal sites and the habitats of vulnerable native animals, according to secret government plans seen by the ABC.

KEY POINTS

Almost 20 Aboriginal sites are under threat from the construction of the Beaches Link tollway

Blueprint warns some destruction “cannot be avoided”

Metro Land Council chief executive Nathan Moran is calling for them to have international protection

The tollway is slated to run between Rozelle and Sydney’s northern beaches and is expected to cost \$14 billion.

The project has already garnered controversy after the ABC exposed the location of smokestacks and toxic plumes along the route.

A 2016 “cabinet-in-confidence” blueprint lists dozens of major heritage impacts, many linked to creating a dual-carriageway road near Garigal National Park.

Almost 20 Aboriginal sites, including hand-painted rock shelters, ancient carvings, shell middens and burial sites, are listed as “key constraints” to the project.

The blueprint warns that for many sites “it will be difficult to justify major impacts” as middens and rock art have “high cultural or social significance” to Aboriginal and other community members.

It recommends stakeholders be told that some destruction “cannot be avoided”.

Indigenous leader Nathan Moran said Sydney contained some of the world’s earliest recorded artworks and Aboriginal people had not been consulted on the extensive plans.

“We think that’s wrong. It’s totally against international standards ... we should be able to determine our culture.

“We should have the right to preserve and protect it, and to be honoured as such.”

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) chief executive Ken Kanofski said broad consultation on the expansion was underway but “if we need to do more, we’re very happy to do more”.

He said the RMS would also refine “part of the alignment” so the roadwork “will have no impacts on the carvings”.

A full Environmental Impact Statement on the project is expected next year.

Push for international recognition Mr Moran said the State Government must recognise the rock-carving sites are interconnecting “sacred areas” and all need international protection.

Waterfront sites on the tollway, such as a whale carving at Balls Head and a secluded rock-art shelter at Clive Park, are also inside the construction zone.

The blueprint warns that blasting associated with roadworks can “cause damage to structures or objects”, and that heritage items are “especially vulnerable to damage”.

Where destruction of Aboriginal heritage is unavoidable, the document suggests “salvage excavation” — the removal of ancient objects — is an option.

Mr Kanofski said the expansion of an existing road reserve should not come as a surprise.

“A huge number of options have

been looked at,” he said.

“The options we’ve chosen are the ones that minimise the impact on the community and minimise the impact on the environment.”

Sydney’s biodiversity under threat The removal of up to 10 hectares of bushland is another impact of the road, and the documents acknowledge this will eliminate animals and plants.

More than 60 threatened animal species live in the project footprint, including swamp wallabies, powerful owls and spotted quoll.

The blueprint said any disturbance of a colony of endangered Grey-Headed Flying Foxes, due to heavy noise or clearing of feed-trees, could trigger the need for Commonwealth approval.

The RMS has confirmed it will clear some of the last stands of Duffy’s Forest, a rare Sydney woodland, along with groves of endangered wattles.

Local GP and environmentalist Connie Harris said this had shocked wildlife groups.

“I cannot believe the State Government has again made such detailed plans without talking to the community, and without letting us know in advance — it’s outrageous.”

The removal of Red Gum forest near historic Artarmon Park, one of Australia’s earliest cricket ovals, is also mentioned in the blueprint. Millions of dollars of bio-banking offsets is suggested as a solution to habitat destruction.

However, the blueprint warns that finding a suitable offset for Duffy’s Forest will be “complex and relatively costly”.

Deputy ALP Leader Penny Sharpe said she will cancel the project if Labor wins government in 2019.

Roads Minister Melinda Pavey was also approached for comment.



Photo: Metro Land Council chief executive Nathan Moran says ancient artworks could be lost forever. (ABC News: Cameron Gooley)

GREG MISKELLY
ABC NEWS

BUSH TO BEACH - IT'S ON AGAIN



Forty kids from Brewarrina, Goodooga & Bourke, some have never seen the surf before, to attend the South Narrabeen surf club next month. The bus is due to arrive about 9 am Friday 18th January and back home on Monday 21st.

Unfortunately, the Event was cancelled last year. The surf club have worked extra hard to pay for accommodation for the mob at Sport & Rec Narrabeen.

ASG-MWP THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR PLANNING IN BRING THE KIDS DOWN FOR A LIFE TIME EXPERIENCE.

RIDE WITH ABORIGINAL PEOPLES



For about 65,000 years Aboriginal peoples called Australia home.

January 2019 is 231 years since 1788 when Governor Captain Arthur Phillip sailed into Port Jackson. 26 January 2019 is 81 years since 1938 when Aboriginal people met at Australia Hall Sydney in what they say is not a day of rejoicing but a Day of Mourning.

Aboriginal people from all over the country met to vote to make new laws to educate and care for Aboriginal peoples and to ask for a new policy to raise Aboriginal people to FULL CITIZEN STATUS and EQUALITY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

This ride is a gesture to acknowledge that not all Australian's see Australia Day in the same way and to stand with Aboriginal Peoples and aim for unity for all Australians.

I hope to see you on 26 January 2019 at 7.00am at the memorial at Manly just west of the wharf where on the 7 September 1790, Wil-Le-Me-Ring speared Governor Captain Arthur Phillip. If you do not

cycle but would like to support the idea, please join us at Manly for the start or at Church Point for coffee/tea.

Below is your invitation and please pass this on to your friends and look for us on Facebook.

WHEN:

26 January 2019, 7:00am

WHERE:

West of Manly wharf at the memorial where Wil-Le-Me-Ring Speared Governor Captain Arthur Phillip

ROUTE:

Manly, Queenscliff, Freshwater, Curl Curl, Dee Why, Collaroy, Ocean Parade Narrabeen, Mona Vale and Church Point back to Manly

NOTE:

Includes a support car so no one is left behind

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Please contact Colin Hutton
P: 0404 353 253
E: COLIN.HTTN@BIGPOND.COM

OUR ELDERS HAVE PAVED THE WAY FOR OUR SUCCESS! THE STRENGTH AND UNITY



Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on the Northern Beaches continue to grows each year.

Most recently on Thursday 13th December 2018, the Northern Beaches Aboriginal community held the Connected Mobs Xmas celebrations.

The event was well attended with over 50 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in attendance.

The community participated in a number of activities which allowed people to come together and chat about culture, share knowledge and celebrate our strengths.

The afternoon was a success with a number of new community members meeting other mob who have lived in the area for many years.

Activities on the afternoon included: Dancing, Basket Weaving, Jewellery Making and Games.

Thank you everyone for their input and support in making this event such a success.

A special thanks goes to the Sydney North Primary Health Network who funded the activities and Melanie Gould who helped to organise the day.

This will continue in the new year with a fortnightly gathering at Bilarong Reserve.

Thank you, Clarence Bruinsma - Event organiser and volunteer.

For more information email: CLARENCE.BRUINSMA@ME.COM

Please like our Facebook page - Connected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mob Northern Beaches NSW for further events.

GURINGAI TOURS BUSH TUCKER NIGHT

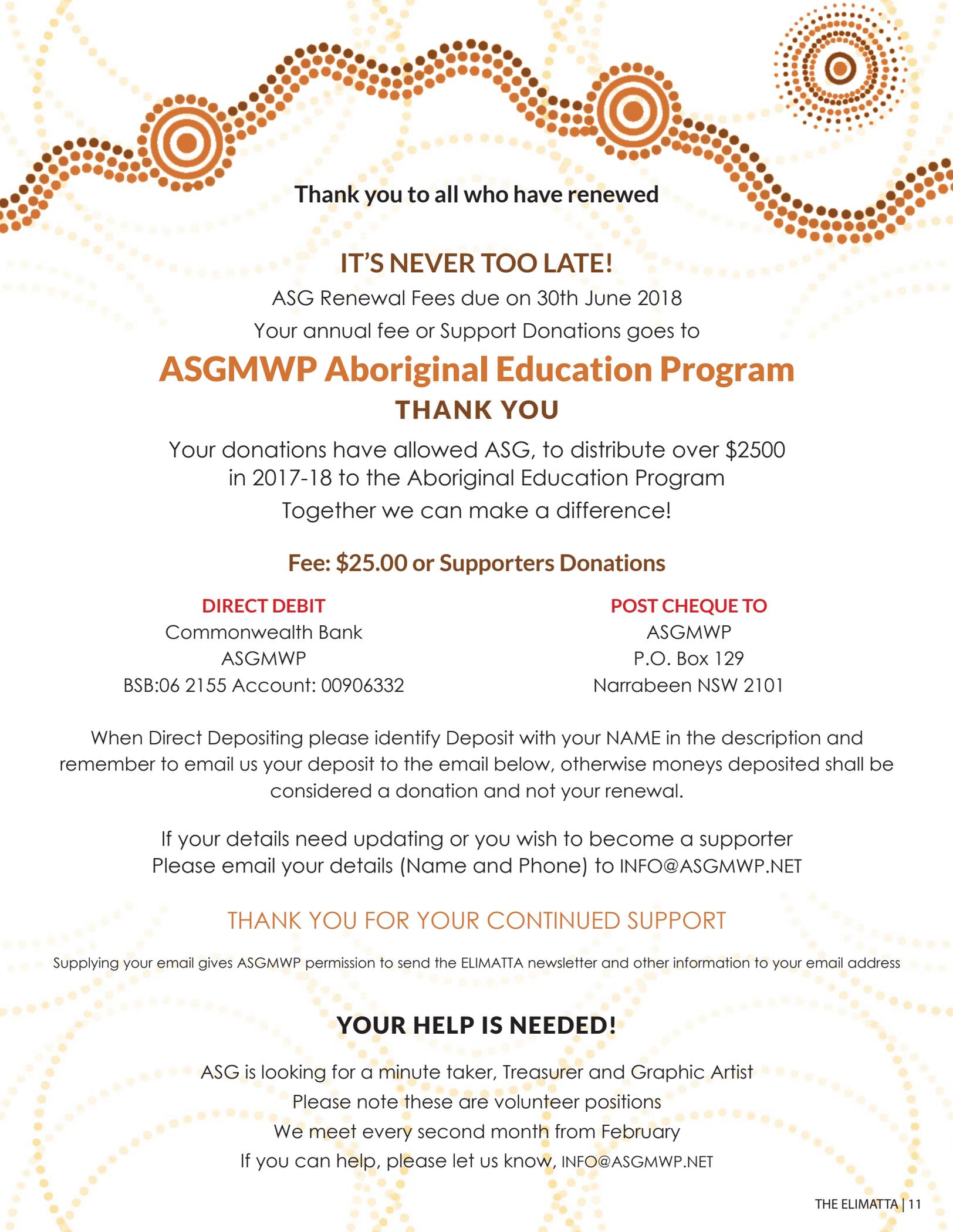
Don't miss this night! Guringai Tours Bush Tucker Night

March 11th 7.30pm till 9.00pm. This is a free night and all are welcome.

Great Bush Tucker and a door prize of a Guringai Tour Family pass (2 adults and 3 children passes valued at \$120).

GURINGAITOURS.COM.AU

Vale: **MARK ANSIEWICZ** passed away recently. Mark was a graphic designer who worked on several projects for ASGMWP. For many years, he prepared the Elimatta Newsletter. The creative style and attention to detail of Mark played a key role in preparing the manuscript for publication for Uncle Bob Waterer's 'The Story of Bob Waterer and his Family 1803-2010' by Nan Bosler. Mark's contribution and support of this group will be greatly missed. RIP.



Thank you to all who have renewed

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE!

ASG Renewal Fees due on 30th June 2018

Your annual fee or Support Donations goes to

ASGMWP Aboriginal Education Program

THANK YOU

Your donations have allowed ASG, to distribute over \$2500
in 2017-18 to the Aboriginal Education Program

Together we can make a difference!

Fee: \$25.00 or Supporters Donations

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When Direct Depositing please identify Deposit with your NAME in the description and remember to email us your deposit to the email below, otherwise moneys deposited shall be considered a donation and not your renewal.

If your details need updating or you wish to become a supporter
Please email your details (Name and Phone) to INFO@ASGMWP.NET

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

Supplying your email gives ASGMWP permission to send the ELIMATTA newsletter and other information to your email address

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!

ASG is looking for a minute taker, Treasurer and Graphic Artist

Please note these are volunteer positions

We meet every second month from February

If you can help, please let us know, INFO@ASGMWP.NET

"What's On?"



2019

JANUARY 26TH

SURVIVAL DAY CELEBRATED ON AUSTRALIA DAY

FEBRUARY 11TH
7.30PM - 9PM

ASG-MWP BUSINESS MEETING

Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Road. All members welcome

MARCH 11TH
7.30PM - 9PM

BUSH TUCKER NIGHT

Not to be missed.

Door prize of 1 Family pass (2 adults - 3 children) to a Guringai Tour.
Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Road. All welcome

MARCH 21ST
7.30PM - 9PM

NATIONAL CLOSE THE GAP DAY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are still dying 10-17 years younger than other Australians

APRIL 8TH
7.30PM - 9PM

ASG-MWP BUSINESS MEETING

Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Road. All members welcome

MAY 13TH
7.30PM - 9PM

MOVIE NIGHT "SPEAR"

It follows a young Aboriginal man, Djali, as he journeys through his community to understand what it means to be a man with ancient traditions in a modern world.

MAY 26TH
7.30PM - 9PM

SORRY DAY

Mona Vale Memorial Hall, 1606 Pittwater Rd. All welcome

MAY 27TH - JUNE 3RD

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK

Building and encouraging relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, organisations, and the broader Australian community

JUNE 3RD

AUSTRALIA CELEBRATES MABO DAY

A turning point for the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights.

JULY 8-15TH

NAIDOC WEEK

2019 theme: **VOICE. TREATY. TRUTH. LET'S WORK TOGETHER.**

ASG-MWP WOULD LIKE TO THANK DEE WHY RSL, PITTWATER RSL AND FORESTVILLE RSL FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT



northern
beaches
council



**ABORIGINAL SUPPORT GROUP
MANLY WARRINGAH PITTWATER**

Founded 1979

MEMBERSHIP IS ONLY \$25 PER YEAR

(02) 9982 1425 www.asgmwp.net
[Facebook.com/ASGMWP](https://www.facebook.com/ASGMWP)
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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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