

Koori Grapevine

"I don't care for the music when they're talking bad about women because I think women are God's greatest gift to the planet." B.B. King

Please be advised this publication may contain names and images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are now deceased.

Lake Macquarie City Council acknowledges the original caretakers and traditional custodians of this land, the Awabakal people and respective clans of the city. Respect is expressed to all Elders past, present, future and cultural knowledge holders.

Contributions for the seasonal, quarterly editions can be emailed to Maree Edwards at medwards@lakemac.nsw.gov.au

From West to Lake Mac and beyond! - 'Tunbilliko'

Tunbilliko (meaning exchange) was an initiative of NSW Police, Lake Macquarie Local Area Command (LAC), and was arranged with assistance and association through various organisations including Hunter TAFE - Aboriginal Learning Circle, Belmont Rotary, Lake Macquarie City Council, NSW Department of Justice Crime Prevention Division - Aboriginal Services, PCYC and the Minimbah AECG.

One of the aims of the pilot program was to enhance and strengthen relationships between the Aboriginal community and the NSW Police Force, and offer five male Aboriginal youth from the Darling Rivers LAC (Bourke and Brewarrina), the opportunity to meet up and engage with five male Aboriginal youth from the Lake Macquarie area. After a tiring trip from the west, all young men met up for the first time at Kurri Kurri TAFE Campus, where they were accommodated for the 5-night stay. Wednesday evening the groups were welcomed with an evening barbeque, a Corroborree and an Aboriginal cultural dance performance which some of the visitors joined in on.

For four days, the young people participated in educational, enjoyable, coastal and cultural activities such as sailing in a race, swimming, kayaking, fishing, painting, bush tucker walk and talk from the bush to the beach and BBQ lunches from Belmont Rotary.

The group visited Newcastle University's Wollotuka Centre and received a guided tour of the university, followed the next day by a tour of Newcastle Police Station, Police Rescue Squad and the Water Police base, where they were guided through the Crime Scene Unit, the Police Radio Room and the shooting range. A highlight was a tour on a police launch around Newcastle Harbour, which was a delight for them all. The boys participated in a men only, cultural bush tucker walk from the bush to the beach, through Glenrock State Conservation Area with a local Aboriginal Discovery Ranger.

The IPROWD program is a specialised program developed by the NSW Police Force and TAFE NSW and the guys had the chance to talk to the students currently enrolled at Tighes Hill TAFE. The purpose of IPROWD is to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in gaining a qualification, develop skills and confidence to succeed in applying for a career with the NSW Police Force. The Newcastle Knight's, Under 20's team train on the grounds of the

TAFE and the boys had the chance to also have an inspiring chat with the young players about education, training and football. On Saturday, the groups attended the NRL game at Hunter Stadium, and after the Newcastle Knights had a victory over the Penrith Panthers, the groups were treated to a meet and greet in the sheds. They were were thrilled to meet players they looked up to, especially Dane Gaigai, Tyrone Roberts and Jamal Indras.

A portrait of Lionel Rose was spray painted by the groups on the wall of the PCYC and on the final evening of their whirlwind tour, a dinner was held to farewell the young lads and to thank all volunteers that had assisted with the program including the Belmont Rotary. All the boys were each presented with a Certificate of Participation and will meet each other again when it is anticipated Tunbilliko travels from the Coast out West in October 2015.

The program was a success due to funding from the Aboriginal Strategic Direction Crime Prevention Grants, Hunter TAFE Aboriginal Learning Circle and Lake Macquarie City Council. Volunteers from Belmont Rotary provided lunches on three out of the four days and through some easy-going guidance from Elders, peers, sportsmen, community folk and authoritative figures, these lads have formed lifelong friendships and learned about culture, mateship and respect in a positive atmosphere.



Tunbilliko team at Glenrock SCA

Close the Gap day

Most Australians enjoy one of the highest life expectancies of any country in the world, but this is not true for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the First Nation People of this country.

Australia's First Nation People can generally expect to live 10 -17 years less than many other Australians do. Babies born to Aboriginal mothers die at more than twice the rate of other Australian babies, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience higher rates of preventable illness such as heart disease, kidney disease and diabetes. The mortality rates for Indigenous Australians is on par with some of the world's most impoverished nations. The United Nations Report, The State of the World's Indigenous Peoples (2009) indicated Australia and Nepal have the world's worst life expectancy gaps between their country's Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

More than 185,000 Australians have now signed the pledge calling for an end to the Indigenous health crisis. The Close the Gap Coalition — a grouping of Indigenous and non-Indigenous health and community organisations — together with nearly 200,000 Australians is calling on governments to take real, measurable action to achieve Indigenous health equality by 2030 www.oxfam.org.au/explore/indigenous-australia/close-the-gap/get-involved-with-close-the-gap

"Statistics of shortened life expectancy are our mothers and fathers, uncles and aunties who live diminished lives. We die silently under these statistics". Professor Mick Dodson, 2009 Australian of the Year and Aboriginal activist and lawyer. Leading up to Close the Gap day, almost 100 signatures were collected on the 'I'm taking the 30 for 2030 challenge' petition and we recognised the day with a specially made cake.

Pictured below are some members of the Lake Macquarie and Newcastle PACC (Police Aboriginal Consultative Committee) who met on Close the Gap day (L-R) Superintendent Brett Greentree, Commander - Lake Macquarie LAC, Inspector Terry Burns, Newcastle City LAC, Maree Edwards, Lake Macquarie City Council, Penny Lee, TAFE Aboriginal Learning Circle, Brett Grogan, ACLO, NSW Police.



Lake Macquarie remembers

A remarkable community event was held in Speers Point Park on Sunday 19 April to commemorate the 100th anniversary of World War I.

Under rain threatening clouds, the morning began with solemn tributes to our heroic ANZACS with wreaths laid amongst the freshly planted rosemary bushes under the Lest We Forget wall. Wreaths assembled in the colours of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags were laid to remember our Black Diggers who also served their country.

Richard Elwata and the Ngattaue Wha Newcastle Maori Club awed the crowd with a traditional Maori Haka and other cultural performances, prior to local lad Jake Dobbie singing the national anthem. The official ceremony was wrapped up with Swansea High School's Gabe Mason, who performed a moving rendition of The Last Post on his bugle.

Terrific entertainment followed on from the official ceremony with female singing sensations, The Stiletto's, a female trio from Canberra, performing an astounding Andrew Sisters tribute show.

A representation of Simpson and his donkey, (aka Nicky from the Good Samaritan Donkey Sanctuary), together with a mocked up wounded soldier meandered through the crowd posing for pats and photographs. A range of historic army vehicles proved popular with the young and not so young visitors and a variety of stalls and displays



were on offer including the magnificent Naruta Ka Wa story quilt, National Parks and Wildlife and a range of memorabilia. The rain held off enough to top the day off with a magnificent grand finale of Glen Bennett's daring tiger moth aerobatics.

Mayor of Lake Macquarie, Cr Jodie Harrison, said the event helped to recognise the contributions of



the thousands of men and women who selflessly fought for our country.

The event was organised by Council Event Officer, Kate Dunn and Ron Mitcherson from Toronto RSL Sub Branch, with support from Event Officer, Rebecca Prince and Federal Member for Charlton, Pat Conroy MP.

The Australian Government's Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program provided funding for this event



'Like' and 'follow' Council online for regular and up to date happenings!

During the blackouts and havoc caused by the recent storms throughout the region, Lake Macquarie City Council's communications team worked tirelessly to keep residents up to date with an assortment of information via their social media pages. These updates were so helpful especially without power and having no other way to find out what was happening. Facebook: www.facebook.com/lakemaccity - Facebook: www.facebook.com/whatsonlakemac

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/lakemac> Instagram: @ourlakemac Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF3ZmOPSMWBS6APXuYJrWg>

Australian Early Warning Network (EWN)

A great way to be prepared for severe weather events is to register for emergency alerts for your area via SMS and email with the Australian EWN to receive free warnings for events such as severe storms, hail, flash floods and damaging winds as well as total fire bans and bushfire threats. This is a privately run system, which Council subsidises for its residents, businesses, schools, community groups, emergency service workers and employees. Visit www.ewn.com.au



Awabakal Ltd believes in a strong community

Awabakal Ltd is one of the oldest Aboriginal community organisations in Australia, and was originally established as a co-operative in 1977 - emerging as a leading example of Aboriginal community power. The organisation provides health, disability, education and community services to Aboriginal people living in Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Port Stephens and the Lower Hunter region of New South Wales. These services are predominately managed and delivered by professional, experienced Aboriginal staff, sensitive to the needs of our community.

Central to Awabakal's philosophy is the idea of holistic care, and the beating heart of this care is at Awabakal Medical Centre (AMC) in Hamilton. The Medical Centre began at the current site in Samdon Street in 1995, operating just a few days per week, with a community nurse and a locum.

Now, the AMC provides primary health care services to approximately 8000 people per year, and offers a variety of health programmes aimed at empowering individuals and families to take the steps they need towards leading a healthy and happy life. Awabakal Ltd believes that healthy families equal a strong community, and this in turn helps contribute towards Closing the Gap.

Closing the Gap can often result in statistics, certainly meaningful in their way but sometimes disconnected to a sense of the here and now for Aboriginal communities. Awabakal Ltd perceives Closing the Gap in a different way - strong mums and dads, babies and kids getting the care they need for a good start in life, Elders who are valued as the centre of community life. Awabakal Ltd celebrates and recognises Aboriginal culture as integral to our community health outcomes.

This belief is manifested in one of the main programmes at AMC, Yunna Boo-larng, which is a Gathang word meaning To Walk Together.

This service aims to support the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal people and their families in the Hunter. It is delivered by qualified Aboriginal health workers and provides specific support around grief, loss and trauma; domestic and family violence; child protection; drug and alcohol misuse; and Stolen Generation.

Yunna Boo-larng promotes healing and inner strength and is a place where Aboriginal wellbeing is in Aboriginal hands.

As local Aboriginal surgeon Professor Kelvin Kong recently said at a Close the Gap Day event, "Closing the Gap is not just about life expectancy, it's being aware of the potential of people's lives."

At Awabakal Ltd, this rings true. The organisation works on a practical level to support the realisation of our community potential and it acknowledges the importance of people's lives through their services.

Awabakal Medical Centre is located at 38a Samdon Street, Hamilton and has Outreach and other settings as required, including home visiting. Phone (02) 4907 8555, email or yunnaboolarng@awabakal.org, or visit www.awabakal.org

Article submitted by Zoe Harrison Awabakal Ltd Media & Communications



Name and Nickname:

Toni Johnston (aka Boppa)

Where are you from:

I was born and raised in Moree, NSW and have lived in Newcastle for over 10 years.

Organisations you work for/role:

Project Officer at Awabakal. I commenced with Awabakal in February 2015.

Who's in your family

Together - my partner and I have 6 children and 3 gorgeous grandchildren. That's the quick answer!

Who's your hero

I have a few depending on what the topic is but my mum is always my first thought - she has always been a strong independent woman and I admire her strength in tough times.

Favourite bush food

I do enjoy a nice Kangaroo steak if its cooked right...lol

Ambitions in life

It changes from time to time but for now I would like to make a positive impact within the local Aboriginal communities through my new role with Awabakal. Short term I would love to see all the participants in the Awabakal Health Challenge achieve their goals!

What services can your Organisation provide to Aboriginal people in Lake Macquarie:

Awabakal offers a range of services to the Hunter Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We have just recommenced our Outreach service to the Lake Macquarie area through the Awabakal Mobile Clinic that visits Nikinpa Aboriginal Child and Family Centre.

Awabakal services include - Medical (i.e. Dr's, Dietitian, Optometrist, Cardiologist), Dental, Disability and Community services, Children services (Preschool and Childcare), Ear checks, Mums & Bubs program. Call us to see how we can help. We would welcome any feedback from community about how we can better deliver our services.

What's on in Winter!

Additional events including Senior's Program, Lake Mac Libraries and Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery programs are available at www.lakemac.com.au

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT
July			
Tuesday 7 July Friday 10 July	"Paint the Lake REaD" launch Westlakes NAIDOC FFD Eastlakes NAIDOC FFD Encouraging children to read to an egg that grows and hatches	Various locations and programs across the city visit www.lakemac.com.au/playtime	Jessica Salvador 4921 0333 jsalvador@lakemac.nsw.gov.au

Significant Dates

DATE	EVENT
26 May	National Sorry Day is a significant day for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and particularly for Stolen Generations survivors. Held annually on 26 May each year since 1998, and born out of a key recommendation made by the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families in the Bringing Them Home Report that was tabled in Federal Parliament on 26 May 1997.
27 May - 3 June	National Reconciliation Week was initiated in 1996 to provide a special focus for nationwide activities. The week is a time to reflect on achievements so far and the things that must still be done to achieve reconciliation. This week is timed to coincide with two significant dates in Australia's history, which provide strong symbols of our hopes and aims for reconciliation www.reconciliation.org.au/nrw/
3 June	Mabo Day marks the anniversary of the High Court of Australia's judgements in 1992 in the Mabo case. Eddie 'Koiki' Mabo's name is synonymous with native title rights and this is a day of particular significance for Torres Strait Islander Australians. www.maboday.com.au
First full week in July	NAIDOC is a celebration across Australia and is about celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language, culture, music and art and building bridges between non-Indigenous Australians and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. www.naidoc.org
1 July	The Coming of the Light is a day of spiritual significance for Torres Strait Islander peoples. It marks the day the London Missionary Society first arrived in the Torres Strait. The missionaries landed at Erub Island on 1 July 1871. Religious and cultural ceremonies are held across the Torres Strait Islands and mainland to commemorate the day. www.tsra.gov.au/the-torres-strait/regional-events-calendar/regular-events
4 August	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day was established in 1988 by the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC). Each year is themed to highlight a significant issue, concern or hope for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children. www.snaicc.org.au
9 August	International Day of World's Indigenous People was first proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1994 to be celebrated every year during the first International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995-2004). In 2004, the Assembly proclaimed a Second International Decade from 2005-2015 with the theme of "A Decade for Action and Dignity". www.un.org/en/events/indigenousday
2 September	Indigenous Literacy Day aims to help raise funds to raise literacy levels and improve the lives and opportunities of Indigenous Australians living in remote and isolated regions. We need your support to help raise funds to buy books and literacy resources for children in these communities. www.indigenousliteracyfoundation.org



Save these JULY dates for Lake Mac NAIDOC events

Monday 6	2pm	Belmont Neighbourhood Bush Tucker afternoon tea and tour. Bookings essential 4947 0031
Tuesday 7	9.15am	Lake Macquarie City Council flag raising and morning tea
Tuesday 7	11am	Toronto Courthouse flag raising
Tuesday 7	11.30am	Westlakes community March The Boulevard Toronto
Tuesday 7	Noon-3pm	Westlakes NAIDOC Family Fun Day Toronto Foreshore
Friday 10	10am-4pm	Eastlakes NAIDOC Family Fun Day Pelican Foreshore
Friday 10	7pm	Westlakes Elders Koorioke, Club Macquarie, Argenton

Additional information on Council's events page closer to the date

All published information is current at time of printing. CP 17056

