

Waaanta

NEWSLETTER

December 2015

Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council

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LOCKHART RIVER ABORIGINAL COUNCIL

Please note there may be images of deceased persons within this publication.

The best of 2015...





A word from...

Mayor Wayne Butcher

It's been a really, really busy year this one, Mayor Wayne Butcher writes...

So as the year draws to a close the first thing I'd like to do is pay my respects to our Elders in this community, and to acknowledge those we have lost. I'd also like to wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas, and to thank you all for your efforts towards making our community better for all.

We actually had a fair bit of road works happening over the past six months, particularly on the main access road into Lockhart River and also the Old Site Road.

Through the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangement (NDRRA) funds and the Queensland Reconstruction Authority works, we've got a fairly substantial amount of investment over the next two dry seasons.

That will include sealing probably nine kilometres of bitumen coming into Lockhart River between the Pascoe River and Garroway Creek.

And we've got a fair bit of work around town too with roads.

The other part is the R2R (Roads to Recovery) money, we're going to seal the beach front and put some shades up and, at the same time, put in a concrete a pad there for the loading bay for the boats.

That will help to control the erosion at the beach front.

Then we've got five houses to build – four by two-bedrooms and one by three-bedrooms, so they're going on to the new subdivision.

They should be done within this financial year.

We have some major housing upgrades as well, bathrooms and shower area replacements, new kitchens and a lot of minor works as well.



Above: Cr Wayne Butcher and Queensland Minister Curtis Pitt

There's also a fair bit of building work going on after our last financial year, which was also good for the Council in terms of building works.

In other news, I've been working with the Peninsula Business Alliance (PBA) in strongly lobbying the State Government to ensure that Cape York businesses have support and do get the opportunity to be a part of the Peninsula Development Road's \$200 million investment over the next five years.

We've got members of the PBA working on the Mein Deviation and also south of Morehead River, so out of the four priority sites on Peninsula Development Road we've got a two, which is a good result.

Never in the history of the Peninsula Development Road has there's ever been any Indigenous business in civil construction, so this is a big turnaround.

The PBA is just a lobby group, not actually a business group.





“We support and lobby on behalf of Indigenous businesses and other businesses as well in Cape York to try and keep most of the PBA investment in Cape York.

In recent months the Minister for Housing Leeanne Enoch visited our community and our discussions were mainly around the Principal Contractor arrangements.

I think she’s happy with continuing that even though it was from the previous government.

What that will mean is the Council will always be in the box seat in terms of being the Principal Contractor in the roll-out of social housing, renovations and minor repairs such as painting, driveways and fencing.

At the LGAQ meeting in Toowoomba earlier this year there was a lot of discussion around the Stolen Wages, the reparation payments for people.

Mick Gooda was there addressing the Indigenous Leaders Forum, so I think that probably captured the main discussion because a lot of the older Counsellors are passionate around that.

While we were in Toowoomba we took the opportunity to catch up with some of our students at Downlands College down there.

I must say the school really was magic, our kids were really happy, and I think they’re at a great school.

Back to home, I think it’s great to see so many partnerships forming between different sectors and even community organisations.

That’s the only way we’re ever going to move forward in this community – we need shared responsibility arrangements and this is where partnerships come into play.

Everybody in the community must stand up and be counted.

Continued next page...

Simone, Zali, Celeste, and Jennifer at Downlands College in Toowoomba with Cr Butcher and CEO Dave Clarke



Queensland Minister Leeanne Enoch with Cr Butcher and LRASC workers



Robyn Murphy of the Murphy Family Trust hands over a donation of \$150,000 towards the construction costs of the new Kuunchi Kakana Centre to Puuya Foundation chair Dottie Hobson





From the Mayor (continued)...

Below: CEO Dave Clarke is standing with Crs Norman Bally and Paul Piva, seated are Crs Veronica Piva, Wayne Butcher and Rose Elu

They all must turn up and take responsibility and the more people who do that the more chance we've got of addressing any issues in the community.

It's a very positive step forward and there's still more work to be done, especially in the area of sports and recreational activities.

Now that the Laura Festival and the footy season are over we have had several community events in the lead-up to Christmas, and we hope there will be more.

We need to keep the community focused and united to move forward. I think cultural events and sporting activities are really the strategic way of developing a united front against all our problems.

The Laura Festival in particular really brought us together as one, and as a Council and as the Mayor I'm really happy to support any ideas people have to bring us together like that again - to be one again.

Wayne Butcher
Mayor, Lockhart River



A word from... *Cr Norman Bally*

Everyone was 'lumped' here but we all stand together in Lockhart community, Deputy Mayor Norman Bally says.

"Each of our five tribes come from different areas around Lockhart but we live together in the Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) area," he said.

"Most people are more comfortable in their own homeland, they know more about their own country and its history."

He said the Council's awareness of this was particularly important to the Men's Centre, the portfolio for which was held by Cr Bally.

"One of the ways Council can best support the Men's Centre is by providing transportation resources to drive our young people, particularly young men, out to their country.

"There's so much work to do here, we're focussing on men's issues and we're trying to set things up so men can be strong and start to take responsibility for being good role models and good fathers.

"A happy and safe Christmas to all."





A word from the CEO...

Well, what a year it has been with action all over the place CEO Dave Clarke writes...

We have been over the mark with our goal setting but thanks to the hard work of the Council team we have hit most of our targets.

Who would not have noticed the progress made by our housing team at Nyimuchin Village or all the new driveways and fences that have gone up?

For people who haven't gone there yet, take a run out to Wachee.

Just watch your speed though as that road is a highway.

I've never seen it better.

A big thank you to the road gang team. Isn't it great to see some of our mob getting in on the road works contractor game, it may be start of bigger things to come.

I think maybe 2016 might be the year for us to think about a whole lot of things going into the future.

How are we going to take advantage of better work opportunities?

Are we ready to grab the chance for work?

What do we need to do to get ready?

Are we ready to grab the chance to have a crack at running our own small business?

How can Council help?

Another thing too, which way our Ngaarchi?

Kuuku Ya'u gang are going ok but which way everyone else?

I think we have been missing our Land and Sea Centre as a place where we can get together to yarn up and work on our land use management together.

Council would like to know what mind people have got on how to get this thing running again?

Remember the struggle our old people had to get recognised for being boss for their Ngaarchi?

That is why we should always respect DOGIT

Day.

This was the first time you me here where Lockhart got the power to decide what happens around here.

So people sarbie why it's important I list out all the Acts of Parliament that put other government mob boss for you me before time:

1865 Industrial and Reformatory Schools Act

1881 Pearl Shell and Beche de mer Fisheries Act

1884 Native Labourers Protection Act

1897 Aboriginal Protection & Restriction of Sale of Opium Act

1939 Aboriginals Preservation and Protection Act

1965 Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders Affairs Act

1971 Aborigines Act

1975 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

(Queensland Discriminatory Laws) Act

1984 Community Services (Aborigines) Act

The *1984 Community Services (Aborigines) Act* is the one that made DOGITs possible.

He come for you me in October 1987 and for the first time State government wasn't boss for us anymore but our own Council was.

Our Council held the land for us and was our elected Local Government.

After that came the Aboriginal Land Act which gave us the Mangkuma Land Trust and the Native Title Act, which is still going.

I finish by saying a big thank you to everyone for putting in the effort throughout the year to make our town a better place. Your efforts are recognised and I thank you all for that.

Next year we need to think big and lift again because there are some great opportunities developing.

Until then, enjoy your Christmas, stay safe, and look after one another.

Merry Christmas everyone.

David Clarke

CEO, LRASC





Corporate Services

Our Finance Director, Stanley Mugwiria, is taking a well-earned break for this edition of Waanta, but he has done a great job making sure all our projects are in line with our grant agreements and our investments are working hard for us so a big thank you to him and our team in Cairns. Sometimes we might forget about them but we know they put in every day so our projects can happen at this end. Merry Christmas everyone!



*Above and left:
Deeanka Hobson,
David Clarke &
Faye Hobson;
Far left: Michael
Short, Cecilia
Accoom, Greta
Accoom & baby
Dakota Short*



Engineering Services

This year we have had a fair bit of work that's been coming through, Building Services Manager Regis Edmond says.

“Most of that is through Building and Asset Services – BAS – which is the old Q-Build – and Project Services,” he said.

“We've started two of the five houses, working with contractors to get them completed within the time frame.

“As well, there's a lot of maintenance work BAS has sent to the Council to be completed after a safety audit which led to an increased volume of maintenance work to be done.

“Most of the problems were electrical and most of it was work that hasn't been reported but needed to be done.

“So Council is actually trying to get them completed now.

“Before the year is out we have some renovations as well, I mean major renos or we call them major refurb.

“A couple of them have been approved so we're still waiting approval for the rest of them and we shall get started on them very, very soon.”

He said they were well-staffed for the jobs at hand, but would still like to employ



some locally-based skilled labourers.

“We probably have five, six staff including the locals, so we're looking at recruiting maybe two or three more – skilled labourers and carpenters.

“It would be nice to find an electrician as well but it's difficult to get a license because there's a lot of training with that.

Mr Edmond said always at this time of year it was a race to

beat the rains.

“We're trying to get all this external work done so we can beat the wet,” he said.

“We're going quite well on site. You do get those little hiccups every now and then.

“Council has been very, very supportive in what we have to do for Building Services, such as with employment, going to find the local boys to help so we can get going.

“I try and create as much work for local people as I can.”





New accommodation units in the form of dongas are in the process of being built-in, keeping Works Superintendent Warren ‘Sprocket’ Davis on the busy side of busy.

“We’ve got five new units getting put in for accommodation,” he said.

“We’ve got one going in where a house is going to be pulled down and two more at the old single men’s camp. There will be a new kitchen to go with them as well.”

He said he was also busy with a road crew working on the old

Mission Site Road, which was just a few kilometres short of completion.

Supervisor Solomon Hobson said it meant a lot to them to be working on the road.

“This is something that really means something to our old people especially,” he said.

“Because most of the old people grew up there from when they were little kids,

some are still alive and it’s good for them to go back and see where they grew up.

“Since we started on it last year we’ve done a pretty good job and now every weekend you see more cars going out there.

“Some camp out and come back on Sunday, and some just go for a day trip because they hear the road is pretty good.”



Lockhart’s plumbing team, under the management of Paul Jensen, has been busy with roofing the Council’s new dongas over recent weeks because the carpenters can’t do it, they say.

Eddie Dean and Patrick Accoom are on the team, working under extremely hot and difficult conditions.

“We’ve got four more roofs to do in town,” Mr Dean said.

“It’s a hot job!

“We’ll also be putting in

a new pump station for the sewage works, as well as more dongas.”

Despite the heat and the hard work Patrick, 15 (pictured right), has recently been signed up as a new apprentice for the team.





Lockhart River's mechanical workshop keeps getting busier, manager Josh Hubbard says.

“Over last year's wet season we didn't get much of a break,” he said. “We haven't got much of the road works this year, but there's still plenty of machine hire and things breaking down.

“We've brought back one of our old bulldozers from the dead – again! But most of the machines are going well at the moment.” He said they had a couple of local boys on staff.

“Anthony's here, rocking – our main mechanic man,” he said. “He's the contract mechanic, for our diesel equipment and heavy machinery from the Coen Workshop which closed down. He comes back and forth.”

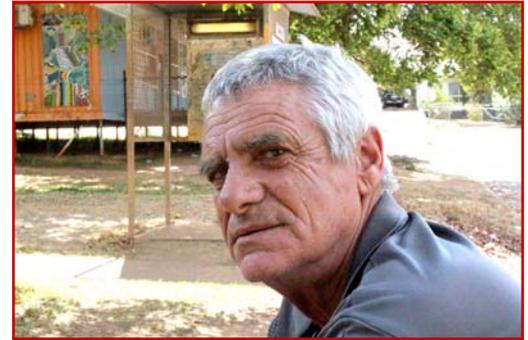




'Steve's Road Gang'

Partnership leading to new pathways for local workers

Job seekers' support agency My Pathways has been working with Council on some of the public spaces around the town and is hoping to soon be able to help out with some of the service organisations as well, Regional Manager Les Robinson says.



“We had crews working at the cemetery, doing some landscaping around town and we’re going to be doing all the mowing of the verges on the road,” he said.

“It’s all work for the dole, which the government is really pushing.

“We want to do better than picking up cigarette butts.

“I’m really keen to joint-venture with the Council.

“We can save them some money, give our clients something useful to do and help them to develop some skills.”

He said they had about 160 people signed up, some of them voluntarily.

“We have to build this with some with pride in wanting to do this, to make the activity something that they get

something out of, not just that it ticks the box for the government but something which actually has meaning to the participant as well,” he said.

“We don’t have a lot of money, but we do have the manpower and I think it’s starting to show – the community is actually starting to respond.”

He said as well as the outdoor work they were also running a kitchen. “There will be a pizza shop there in the next month, hopefully owned by the ladies from day one,” he said.

“So, we’re doing catering and we’re planning on doing 50 meals for the community.

“The main reason is a health thing. We want to give people a healthy alternative instead of downing the chicken, the chips and the coke.

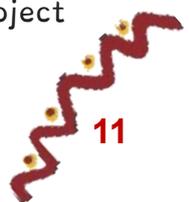
“The average life span of an



Indigenous male in Lockhart is still 47, and you see it in the morning – kids walking out there packet of chips, a can of coke – and 20 years later they get diabetes.

“So, yes, our kitchen is going to be a big project for our women.

“Everyone is keen to get it off the ground.”





Language books aimed at kick-starting cultural skills

A set of 11 language books, written by Julie Warradoo and illustrated by Phyllis Hobson, along with a CD has been printed up and is available now for Lockhart River families and teachers.

Ms Warradoo said the books, written in Kuuku Ya'u and Umpila, were produced thanks to Elders, past and present, who had kept their culture strong.

"I was sitting here reading Father David Thompson's and Clair Hill's books and I just thought it would be nice to make something easy to read for younger ones," she said.

"The idea was to make the books for my kids and families and teachers from the community, which would give them the opportunity to read words in language as

well as English.

"We got most of our funding from Lockhart Aboriginal Shire Council as well as the Puuya Foundation.

"There are three stages to the idea.

"The first stage is 20 books of all single words, all with an illustration.

"The second stage is 20 books of bringing the single words into sentences, just step-by-step, and the third stage is trying show relationships, which I'm still working on.

"We received funding for the first stage to be printed and a

lot of work has already gone into it."

Fr David Thompson said the work he had done with fellow linguist Ms Hill had taken three years to produce language-learning materials for home and family use.

"Julie specifically wanted something done for the younger ones," he said.

"The idea was to do one word to one page with an illustration.

"We thought of flash cards, but that was going to be too messy, so we settled on these little books.





Facing page: Fr David Thompson & Phyllis Hobson;

Above: Julie, Virrin, Mereki, Shontea & Stella Warradoo; Left: Phyllis and her grandson

“There was just the three of us working on it, but we printed 300 books.”

Ms Warradoo said there were many people to thank.

“I’d like to thank all the past and present Elders for keeping their culture strong, my family and friends, the Council and the Puuya Foundation for their support with funding, Fr David Thompson and Phyllis, and also miimi Mrs Short for the sound recordings which went onto the CD, and my grandmother miimi Susie Pascoe for teaching me her culture,” she said.



The cream of Lock

A surprise concert by the best of Lockhart's musicians was held at the school in October, with special guest guitarist Adrian Omeenyo and a video documentary crew from Mission Australia.

Mission Australia is a non-denominational Christian community service organisation that has been helping people to regain their independence for over 155 years.

Support Manager for Mission Australia in Cairns, Sam Karam, has been working to video document one of their success stories – former-Lockhart resident (and star guitar player) Adrian Omeenyo.

“I work for Mission Australia, I'm a Support Manager down there, and we run an accommodation facility and part of that facility is people finding their recovery from hard times,” Sam said.

“This journey has been about getting Adrian back to country and telling his stories to all the world.

“We have film maker Victor Steffensen, assistant Lomas Amini, and we've driven up from Cairns.

“We've been filming for the week and we're going to do some more filming next week when we return to Cairns, tell the other half of Adrian's story.”

Adrian said he was very happy to be home again.

“I'm glad to be back home again just for a short period of time but I'm definitely in love with the place again – beautiful beaches and some of my friends and family still around here today; they're happy to see me back home,” he said.

“There's a lot of change for me in a few years or so, since I was sent away from home.

“Music is just the way I am and I'm pleased I have music – part of my talent is sharing with students, so the school was a good place to be.”



The travelling crew: Lomas Amini, Sam Karim, Adrian Omeenyo & Victor Steffensen

ckhart musos put on a show





Community Development Team

It's all about successfully working together in Lockhart River these days, and one of the many successful partnerships being formed around the community at present are between the Indigenous Knowledge Centre (IKC/Library) coordinator Greita Pascoe, Youth At Risk Initiative coordinator Krystal Dean and My Pathways manager Les Robinson (and the Men's Group and the Justice Group!).

"I'm trying to start up a history project based on Lockhart River," Ms Pascoe said.

"The reason I asked Krystal to be involved with this program was so we can do some IKC activities here at Lockhart.

"We have too many of our young children doing a lot of damage in our community.

"The reason is boredom.

"Next year I'll try, with Krystal, to work on country at least one day a week with the youth."

She said their biggest project at this time of year was developing a School Holiday program.

"With this School Holiday Program we would like to work with all ages," Ms Pascoe said.

"So, Krystal, Puuya and I would also like to get involved with PCYC, that's Talia and Dennis now, so they work with all ages.

"That's a big part of the role, I think, with Krystal – gathering these youth, picking them up, dealing with troubles.

"We're here to help.

"That's what me and Krystal are wanting to do for our young generation."

Krystal said it was all about supporting young people.

"We just started talking about how we could come together to make a plan to work together and how we can all support the young people and where they want to go and how to get there."

My Pathways Regional Manager Les Robinson said they wanted to do whatever they could to help.



More Laura pics on p 28!



Indigenous Knowledge Centre (IKC/ Library) coordinator Greita Pascoe (above left) has been in Cairns for a workshop based on encouraging our youngest community members to use the library.

“It was based on the first five years, so the ages were from zero to five years old,” she said.

“It was about learning basic strategies for what we can teach the children when they’re at that age, how their brain develops and learns.”

She said it had included the importance of literacy and numeracy.

“They are the most important factors in our life for the future, for the children’s sake,” she said.

“So, when we do a program or project on the local IKC, that’s what we try to do most – children activities for any age from zero to 11, when they go off to high school, so we also work around the Youth area, even if they’re not going to high school.

“The workshop was also about digital work with the IKC.”

She said she was keen to work with youth as well as the Puuya Foundation’s Kuunchi Kakana Centre.

“I would like to combine with Youth so a part of working with Krystal is also in the project,” she said.

“Most of the parents and carers there, they teach their children little bits and pieces.”

For the past few months YARI coordinator Krystal Dean has been working with a few girls to help with whatever support she can offer them.

“I’m asking them what do they want to do with themselves, especially the ones that are just doing nothing,” she said.

“So, I’ve helped two girls, to get them to get through My Pathways and get a job.

“Supporting them to actually go and look for a job they want to do – so they think about what they really want to do instead of just saying: ‘Oh, you know, get a job’.

“What happens then is when they get a job they find out they’re not interested in the job, that they don’t like it, and that’s why they just go halfway and go back to doing nothing.

“I started realising that and asking what do they like to do or what do they love to do.

“Some of them say that they love to do hairdressing, so then we talked about doing training with My Pathways.”

Ms Dean has also been working with the PCYC, the IKC and the Puuya Centre on the School Holiday program, and is keen also to hook up with the Men’s Group.

“I’ve been working with girls because the boys don’t feel comfortable with talking to me about what they want and that,” she said.

“That’s why me and the Men’s Group coordinator Greg Omeenyo are going to catch up and work together.

“It’s good to partner with other workers here so we can work together to help with young people.

“For Christmas we were talking about starting up island dancing and Shake a Leg, like we used to do.

“When we were small, we used to see our elders do it all the time and it didn’t happen last year and the year before, so me and Greita are going to talk to Father Brian about it so we can start practicing now and getting the youth involved in carrying on our tradition.”





Recently appointed Men's Group Coordinator Greg Omeeny is excited.

“We're starting to, steady, steady, make things available for the men who are wanting to come up here,” he says.



“Basically, it's about trying to make them come up here but also, at the same time, joining in with activities.

“We just had a big workshop, where there was talk about launching a book, and one of the outcomes was that was everybody came up with ideas.”

He said the building belonged to the men in the community and he wanted them to feel comfortable.

“It's important, it comes back to themselves in regards to health and wellbeing,” he said.

“One of the things we've tried to do is implement programs with other agencies.

“We've got a Men's Group committee already being sorted out where and we intend to speak to Health, the Magistrates, the Justice Group and the Council.

“So it's a big community of support here, where we can have an Anger Management Program up here, or an Alcohol Awareness Program.

“And also with My Pathways, they're starting to come in now, people are starting to give that support.

“So again, it all falls back to health and wellbeing where you got that supporting structure around there with agencies

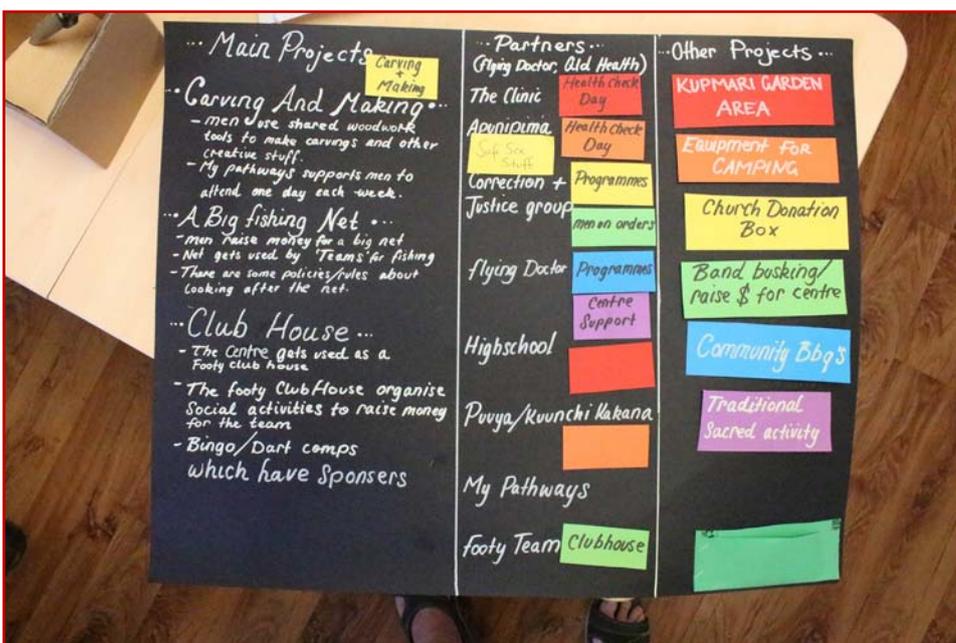
coming in and putting their share in there, where everybody speaks from the same place and also especially from the domestic violence side.

“We're trying to look at cooling-off systems here, like taking the boys out, and again it all falls back to the efforts.

“Without the effort we can't really do anything; we only can implement stuff up here, but to actually get out and about and start doing men's stuff especially on country stuff, it's taking them away from an environment where it's more open space and they feel more comfortable.

“For myself it feels very comfortable. I have the support of the Deputy Chairman, one of his portfolios is with the Men's Group – that's Norman – and he's been giving a whole lot of support for myself because I was new to this.

“That is really good coming from the Council side, giving their support, which helps a lot.”





Lockhart River community got well and truly behind an anti-domestic violence march held in September this year.

“Everyone came along to support it,” Women’s Shelter worker Lorraine Clarmont said.

“There was children, and the My Pathways boys came along, Justice Group members, Puuya Foundation, everyone!

“We had a BBQ here afterwards, and it was good to see.

“I’d like to see this change where everything runs smoothly, everybody is happy, taking the family out for picnics or camping – that’s what we all like to do.

“It’s up to the parents themselves to change, I can’t change anyone.”

She said the Women’s Shelter was still hosting activities for women during the day.

“I think it’s getting a bit lower on domestic violence here because we’re just getting ladies now and then,” she said.

“I think people have got the message.”

Colleague Luka Getawan said they were still hosting activities for women during the day.

“We’ve made some coconut leaf brooms, we do sewing, sometimes we take the ladies down to the beach for some exercise,” she said.

“All our women are welcome to come and see what’s going on.”





The team at HACCS is taking good care of their current 24 clients with some new delivery innovations and a new raft of activities on the agenda.

Coordinator Noella Clarke has also been working on the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

“We’re not on it yet but it’s said to be the biggest social and economic reform to Medicare,” she said.

“And what it means is anybody with a permanent disability will be put on the Scheme and they will be provided for much much better than they have been until now.

“What it means is you will have a say where you want your money spent.”

If you want more information you can see Noella at the HACCS where she will be busy organising a new veggie garden, fishing, beading, crocheting, soap making, sewing, BBQing or embroidering.

“We’ve brought in a lot more activities,” she said.

“We cook three days a week now and have sandwiches on

Thursday.

“They’re very nutritious and have lots of lettuce,

grated carrot and protein and we think that’s a nice summer meal for people to have in the middle of the day.

“We’ve also got a new microwave, fridge and stove.

“We do domestic assistance with clothes washing for our clients who need that help – we’ll pick it up in the morning and bring it back in the afternoon.

“And we’ll assist all our clients with transport around the community as well.

“What we’re trying to do is increase all our services to all of our HAC clients and we’re willing to help in any way we can because that makes our reporting to the government look really good and then we get good funding, and that is very important because we

can’t exist without funding.”

HACCS worker Leila Clarmont said it was good to be able to offer clients fresh water, fruit and yoghurt in addition to their usual menu.



“It’s really nice to work with Noella, we’ve known her for a long time now,” she said.

“She’s really good at helping us, I’m really liking work with everyone at the moment, we’re a good team.”

Teammate and colleague Bessie Hobson said as well as their HACC clients they have had several ‘full houses’ with guests coming in almost every day of the week.

“Anyone can stay here,” she said.

“They can phone us and the paperwork will be sorted by our Cairns office.”

Mrs Clarke said while she was keen to help bring everything, including reporting, streamlined, she was also keen for her own retirement.

“Then I would hand back to someone in the community because once that’s done my job is done and I see myself out of a job,” she said.

“I’ve told them, ‘don’t think you’re stopping me from going for my retirement!’”





The Kuunchi Kakana (Families Together) Centre is nearly complete.

The past few months have been very hectic as the building has taken shape.

We are hopeful the building will be complete by the wet season in Lockhart River.

The building was manufactured by Force 10, with much input from the community and others for the design.

Our builder, Canstruct Pty Ltd, has worked closely with local builder ESW Constructions in the building of our centre.

We have been fortunate there have been several local tradespeople in the community who have also worked on the building, which has been great to see – hopefully they are very proud of their achievements.

The building will be one of the biggest buildings in the community and it will stand out with all of the solar panels on the roof.

It will be a great centre for early years activities as it has been purpose built.

We will initially run our early years learning and parenting program from the new centre, as well as activities for parents.

We anticipate the centre will be open mid February 2016.

Puuya Foundation CEO Denise Hagan said, “I am very proud we have been able to get an early years centre for Lockhart River, and that we can provide a good education for our little ones so they get the best start to life.”

Puuya Foundation were very fortunate to have received the funding for the centre through the State Government, Murphy Family Foundation and others. This will truly be a centre operated by the community. Our current services being delivered by our Manager Tanya Koko and early years staff will continue to run out of the old Playgroup Building depending on the



completion of the new building.

We may be in the old building at the beginning of 2016 so keep your eyes and ears open for news of this!

...Continued next page...



Visits

Over the past few months, we have also been busy with many visitors.

These have included Minister Coralie O'Rourke, Minister Leanne Enoch (*above right*), and the Murphy Family Foundation (Robin Murphy – *above left with Mayor Wayne Butcher* – and Jane Murphy). All of these people have been very supportive of the work of the Puuya Foundation and are keen to see us succeed in the community.



*Kuunchi
Kakana
Mum's and
Bub's Group*



Early Years Program

Every Wednesday the Kuunchi Kakana Mum's and Bub's Group go down to the School's pre-prep building to do FAFT (Families as First Teachers) programs with parents and carers, manager Tanya Koko says.

The Kuunchi Kakana Centre opens every morning Monday to Thursday at 9am for the Montessori Program and, other than on Wednesdays, runs until noon.

"The FAFT program enables parents and carers to make their own educational resources to take home," Tanya said.

"It also gives bubs a chance to get familiar with the school environment.

"That includes meeting and getting to know the pre-prep teacher and teacher aides.

"Miss Barb also caters for our lunches, so we are very grateful for that and the hard work the school team, including Siobhan, do for us.

"A big thank you to all for allowing the program to be held at the school."



Kuunchi Kakana Mum's and Bub's Group

As this is the final WAANTA for the year, the Puuya Foundation Board and staff members would like to take the opportunity to wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas, and we look forward to you joining us in our new centre in 2016 for our early years activities with your little ones.

For more information on Puuya Foundation contact

Dottie Hobson or Denise Hagan on 0419 681 025, or about Kuunchi Kakana activities speak to Tanya Koko (KK Manager) on 0438 255 474.





School records best attendance on the Cape

For the past few months Anna Johnson, from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, has been at the Lockhart School to support local Student Attendance Officers, known as SAOs.

“We’ve got six SAOs and an Attendance Supervisor working to get all the kids in Lockhart River to school every day,” she said. “We want all kids of Lockhart River to go to school all day every day so that they can get a great education and then in the future they can be whatever they want to be. We’re really flexible; whatever is needed to help get kids to school and help keep them here at school.

We play sports with the kids – that’s first lunch and second lunch – and really work on those strong relationships with the kids and their families in the community so that we can get all kids to school every day.”

SAO Laloma Bounghi said it was often hands-on help.



“We work with parents and kids around the town get kids to school on time, so getting them dressed, providing lunch or whatever we need to do.”

Principal Siobhan Jackson said she was proud to announce a 100% success rate for 2015’s Years 7 and 8 students completing a full year at boarding school.

“That is the best data on the Cape and we are so proud!” she said.

She said school would resume on Wednesday 27th January and she was looking forward to breaking those attendance records!

Apunipima offers help to smokers

Helping people in communities to ‘butt out’ was the aim of Apunipima Cape York Health Council’s visit to Lockhart River in October.

Apunipima’s Healthy Lifestyles team had an interactive display to tackle smoking and featured resources including a smoker’s lungs, a smoker’s mouth, the chemicals in a cigarette and a jar of tar.

For about three hours, the team (Jana Booy and Neil Fourmile) engaged with about 30 community residents at the Lockhart store educating them on the risks and dangers of smoking and the support and services available to quit.

The jar of tar shows the amount of tar accumulated over a year if half a packet of cigarettes is smoked.

At the stall, the team said there were about 10 people who were



serious about taking steps to quit smoking.

“The jar of tar is an invaluable resource because people don’t actually stop to think about what they’re inhaling, they just light up cigarette after cigarette,” Ms Booy said. “This jar shows people the stark reality of what smoking can do to your health.”

Before setting up the tackling smoking stall, the team visited students at the school and educated them about the risks of smoking and what passive smoking does to people.



Younger people wanted for Justice Group

Willy Clark is in his seventh year as Justice Group coordinator for Lockhart River, and says he's keen to find new and younger members of the group to continue to support people in the community.

"We'd like to see skills go up because education is key to getting a job," he said.

"The kids all marched in our Domestic Violence March, they're all against domestic violence and they speak up about it. The courts are

putting heavier penalties now on domestic violence and people need to be aware that with domestic violence serious accidents can happen – serious injuries and even death.

"The community needs to understand that domestic violence

is not appropriate in Lockhart River or anywhere else."

He said alcohol was also a problem.

"I just want to say that people need to start controlling themselves with alcohol," he said. "We need to start working together, trying to get people to work with Justice and Council and Police to stop sly grogging in the community – people know who is selling sly grog and should record it; they are making more money than you are."

He said the key was in working together.

"I just hope that the community can start working together now and start supporting each other in this community, addressing skill issues for our children," he said. "I want people to start supporting the Justice Group and help us get some programs done for children on the weekends – putting them out on camping trips and that – be real good."



New Police Officers Mel Weatherall and Officer in Charge Andy Everest are married and have come up to Lockhart together from Cairns.

Andy has worked on Thursday Island as well as in Mareeba, Palm Island, White Rock, Hopevale, Cooktown and Cairns.

Mel was a police officer in the UK before she came to Edmonton, and is keen to work with kids in Lockhart River.

Both say they are keen to be a part of the community.

"We try to be very community-minded in our work," Andy said.

"We want to work with the community to make it a safe place for everyone."



Art centre working to get back on track

AGM

The Lockhart River Art Indigenous Corporation had it's AGM on Friday 23rd October 2015 and elected the following people as Directors:

Patrick Butcher (Chair)

Margery Accoom

Silas Hobson

Elizabeth Giblet

Sue Pascoe

There was good attendance by members who had heard about the financial situation of the Art Centre, and how the last 12 months had gone, and got to talk about how the Corporation was being run.

INTERIM MANAGER APPOINTED

Following the resignations of Peter and Robbi Neal the LRAIC Board asked the Indigenous Art Centre Alliance (IACA) for assistance. Brett Evans, who is the IACA Art Centre

Development Officer, was asked to act as Interim Manager until a new Manager can be appointed.

Brett has 13 years experience in the Art Centre industry and was able to turn Mornington Island Art Centre into Queensland's leading art Centre during his time there. He also lived on Mornington Island for 31 years and is the perfect person to help LRAIC rebuild.

NEW BUSINESS PLAN

Tim Acker has just completed Stage 1 of a new Business and Strategic Plan with the Board & members.

The Plan will be used to help LRAIC re-establish its reputation as one of the leading Art Centres in the country and grow it's exhibition program nationally and increase sales and production of high quality work.

BOARD GOVERNANCE TRAINING

As part of the rebuilding process Maggie Kavanagh, a highly experienced Governance Trainer, has also completed a two-day training workshop with the Board and members of the Corporation. It was a highly enjoyable two days and the participants found it very informative and empowering, giving the Board much needed confidence to lead the rebuilding process.





Puuya Kuntha - Strong Heart



EXHIBITION PROGRAM

The Lockhart River Art Gang will be holding its first exhibition of 2016 at Art Mob in Hobart Tasmania in January 2016.

We plan to have many more exhibitions in 2016 and over the coming years to return LRAIC to prominence on the national stage and hopefully internationally.

The next few years will be hard work but exciting and the Board would like to invite all

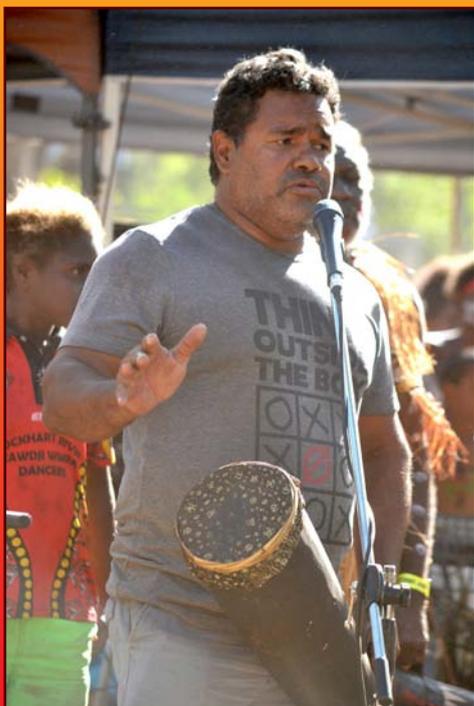


our community members who are keen to take part in the Art Centre's activities to come along for the ride.

We're hoping to build the Art Centre back into what it once was.

This year marks 20 years since it started, which is an amazing achievement, but we need your help to bring the Art Centre back to its former glory.





These pics of Laura 2015 are thanks to Kathi Gibson & Tracey Lee Ludwick