



# Palm Island Voice

Your Community  
Your Newsletter  
Your Voice



ABORIGINAL SHIRE COUNCIL

Thursday 19 December 2013

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Issue 144

## Stable on Palm 'huge' success



The inaugural Stable on Palm Island was a huge success with more than 500 local men women and children playing a part.

The event was modelled on the Stable on the Strand which has been held along the Townsville Esplanade for the past 12 years.

Archie Fraser, who played Joseph, said it was exciting. "It was exciting to

see something like this happening on Palm and it felt real good to be involved and be a part of it," he said.

"It was good to see families come down and support it and get into the

true spirit of Christmas, which is celebrating the birth of Jesus and also about families getting together and sharing."

*...Continued on page 5...*

**MORE PICS  
INSIDE!!!**



# Palm boasts first female truckie

IN her job as the only female truck driver on Palm Island, Agnes Joyce Wotton is proving to be an inspiration for other women.

The 42-year-old Agnes was in her fifth week of working for the Palm Island Shire Council when the Palm Island Voice spoke to her last week.

Agnes can often be seen delivering soil and rock from a Terex dump truck for the sea wall project along the Esplanade.

“I did my training to drive trucks here on Palm and got my licence on 11th December of 2012. I really enjoy the job,” Agnes said.

For 18 years Agnes was a “stay home housewife” raising five children, including twins, aged from 11 to 18.

Agnes hopes that her job will help other Palm Island women to do what they want in life.

“Being a truck driver was always a dream of mine which has come true and Palm has many women who can also achieve and do what they want,” she said.

Whilst driving trucks is mostly a



men’s bastion, Agnes has fitted in well with other workers.

“I ask a lot of questions and the blokes are always helpful. I am learning new things every day,” she said.

Local resident Andrea Kyle-Sailor said she was extremely proud of Agnes.

“She is setting an example

for the women of Palm Island and showing that we are capable of doing anything,” Ms Kyle-Sailor said.

Agnes wanted to thank Kevin Hunter and Tracey Hunter, who put her through the driving course, and the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council.

“The Council gave me a go by giving me the job,” she said.

## Big night finishes Bwngcolman school year

A concert night has capped off an exciting year for Bwngcolman Community School.

Each year the community fills the PCYC hall to watch their kids perform and celebrate their achievements for the year.



Teacher Rosalie Tennent said this year’s concert was a great success, with plenty of support from communities and families.

“Highlights of the evening were the 3/4A performance ‘A Foxy Jingle’ and the 9/10A performance ‘When I grow up’,” she said. (9/10A is pictured left.)

She said every current student played a part in the evening’s entertainment.

# Ferry to run 6 extra services in 2014

Palm Island will have six additional return ferry services to choose from next year, after successful negotiations between the Council and the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

Mayor Alf Lacey said the extra ferry services will provide great benefits to not only Palm Island, but also Townsville, as most islanders do their business in the city.

“This creates great opportunities for the Palm Island sporting clubs and schools, because it allows us to interact with the wider community,” Mayor Lacey said.

“The partnership between our local member John Hathaway and SeaLink has been tremendous.”

Member for Townsville John Hathaway said the Newman government’s funding of the extra ferries was recognition of the unique nature of Palm Island.

“There are times when there might be strong demand for additional services such as cultural, sporting or even significant family events that involve large numbers of travellers; and the ferry service should be responsive enough to cope with those times,” Mr Hathaway said.

“The funding of the extra services has come from reallocation of government funds, however the decision when to utilise the extra services remains with the local community.

“The purpose of these extra ferries throughout the year is to ensure the cultural and economic development goals of the Palm Island Aboriginal

Council are supported by the availability of transport to and from the island if required.”

Mr Hathaway said the determination of when to schedule the extra services is planned by Council in consultation with the Palm Island Tourism and Transport Committee.

The department of Transport and Main Roads is then advised by Council of the decision.

“The local community is best placed to determine their own requirements of how they use these additional six services each year.”

More than 46,000 passenger trips were taken on Palm Island ferry services in 2012–13.





These are just some of the winners from the end of year Cathy Freeman Foundation Awards. Well done everyone!!!

*Pics courtesy CFF and Joe Istria*





# Stable on Palm a success

Event co-ordinator Pastor Ada Boland represented the Indigenous Pastors Network of Townsville region and was working in partnership with Stable on the Strand.

“This is important to build the heart of reconciliation and breaking down the walls of racism and discrimination in both cultures,” she said.

“It was very successful for the first time on Palm Island.

“The Council provided accommodation and also put on a community barbecue.

“Stable on Palm has been a ground breaking event to encourage our local ATSI community to participate in our Stable on the Strand in the years to come.”

The Council was the major sponsor of the two-night event which was kicked off with a traditional welcome to country and smoking ceremony, and an official opening from Mayor Alf Lacey.

Cr Lacey said he was happy his community and people had another way to celebrate Christmas.

Archie Fraser played the character of

Joseph, Virginia Kerr was Mary and Robert James the baby Jesus who featured heavily, especially in the nativity scenes.

Night one was a mini concert and the following evening the main celebrations were held and these were broadcast live by Townsville based Christian Radio Station Live FM.

Palm Island churches provided most of the volunteer actors who told the Christmas story in festivity and song.

They acted out the Bible story of the birth of Jesus Christ with local actors also playing the roles of the Three Wise Men and shepherds.

More than 70 volunteers travelled to Palm to train the local actors.

Local school and adult entertainers also proved popular including those from Bwgcorman Community School and a didgeridoo player.

Guest artists included

International Gospel Artist Pat Morgan who had many family members of Palm, Burdekin Gospel Outreach Band, Blood and Fire Band and Aitkenvale International Choir.

Other artists included Youth With A Mission's (YWAM's) own 'Island Breeze', a South Pacific dance troupe which entertained the locals with their unique style of music and dance.

Many Palm Island families will also likely be at the Townsville Stable on the Strand from 18 to 22 December.

...MORE PICS NEXT PAGE...









# Stable on Palm 2013





# Palm Island Voice

## Public & Community Notices



Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council has 204 'likes' on Facebook!!!

**Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council** will close for Christmas & New Year from

**25 December 2013 to 1 January 2014.**

**All staff to return to work on Thursday 2 January 2014.**

For emergencies during the holiday period please call **0458 789 011.**

For more information contact Council on 4770 1177.

## Finance Officer

Coolgaree Aboriginal Corporation is a dynamic corporation committed to serving the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Palm Island in Queensland. We are now seeking a Finance Officer to provide financial administration duties including but not limited to; cost control, reconciliations payroll, BAS processing, Debt collection and data entry. This position reports directly to the CEO.

Contact: Rob Beattie  
ceo@coolgaree.com.au  
Applications close 6th January 2014

## Advertising & Subscription Rates

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Full A4 Page: \$550 + GST

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(Inclusive from now to end 06/14)

Subscription rates will vary according to when the initial subscription is taken out (eg if taken in January 2014 the rate will be half of the full year to take it to July 2014).

**To book an ad or to inquire about subscriptions please contact the Editor, Christine Howes, on 0419 656 277 or via chowes@westnet.com.au**

**Please support us so we can continue to support you!**



# Trainer hopes best boxers will pack their punches in 2014

By Ray Dennis

I started training boxers on Palm Island in 1999 and would have to say that 2013 has been the worst year to date results-wise.

We had no boxers at the Queensland Golden Gloves or Australian Titles and only three at the State Championships.

Our three boxers – Dennis Haines jnr, Levi Baira and Kathleen Haines – all won gold at the State Titles.

Young Levi was also judged best junior boxer. Apart from that it has been a very bad year. I am hopeful we can do much better during 2014. I have three female boxers, Kathleen Haines, Natalie David and Shirley Curley, who should do well in the New Year, and Levi can do really well if he keeps training hard.

Patrick Clarke and Reggie Palm Island have bright futures if they turn professional.

I have no doubt they could have won Australian amateur titles this year but they only came back to training with me at the end of 2013.

There are quite a few young boys who have told me they want to box again.

Brayden Nallajar should do well come 2014 when he gets a bit more experience.

Kathleen Haines did well to beat a Queensland champion in Mareeba and will continue to be very hard to beat against anyone her own age and weight.



I have been training on Palm for 15 years and have had 41 Australian champions, 59 State Title holders and 86 Golden Gloves gold medallists.

I really wish to thank the Palm Island Company, Cathy Freeman Foundation, Raymond Sibley, the Coolgaree Sports Bar and Grill and all the people who helped out with raffles.

Without their help our boxers would have gone nowhere in 2013.

I wish everybody on Palm Island a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

## ABOUT THIS FONT:

The font used in this newsletter is called 'Dyslexie' and has been designed for people who have difficulty reading, especially those with dyslexia, so they can read more easily.

For more information see <http://www.studiostudio.nl>





# Pedigree of success in TDRL

by Alf Wilson

AS Palm Islanders rest over the festive season and ponder on what the future holds, some of their thoughts may be around the Palm Island Barracudas being accepted into the Townsville and District Rugby League competition in 2014.

In Townsville, where many Palm Islanders live, there is much anticipation for the start of the 2014 TDRL season.

It is sure to be an emotional day when the Palm Island A Grade and Under 19 sides run out for round one which will probably be in early April.

The official draw will be done in the New Year.

Barracudas will play their home games at Townsville's Bindal Shark Park, which has excellent facilities.

Bindal will also field a reserve grade side and crowd numbers at Shark Park are expected to be high.

With an increase in the number of return ferry services, many Palm residents will travel over the briny to watch their beloved Barracudas.

Relatives in Townsville will come to the fore to provide accommodation for some of the Barracudas players and there will be no shortage of venues after games to celebrate victories, or commiserate loses (which we hope are few).

A lot of hard work has gone on behind the scenes

by Palm Island Rugby League (PIRL) President Lex Wotton, Cr Eddie Walsh, Bindal's Jenny Pryor, the Palm Island Shire Council, and others to ensure the Barracudas application for entry was successful.

One tireless worker for Palm footy over a long period has been Cr Roy Prior, now Deputy Mayor for 2014.

The Barracudas last played in the TDRL back in 2002.

Personally, I have many golden memories of covering games well before that when they were in the mainland competition.

In 1987 I travelled to Palm to cover a home game between the Barracudas and a University side coached by former international hooker Brian Fitzsimmons.

Uni defeated the Barracudas in that fixture match and went onto win the TDRL grand final that year.

But that was a rare home defeat for the Barracudas who won the vast majority of their games at the local oval.

Around that era I recall covering games when the Barracudas played at the Townsville Sports Reserve.

One youngster, aged no more than 10, was yelling out "up the Barracudas" - whoever it was may well be reading this now!

I also have memories of flying winger David Geia leaving four or five opposition defenders in his wake as he bolted towards the try line.

Next time you see David down at the Sunset Snack Bar or on Anzac Day have a yarn to him about this.

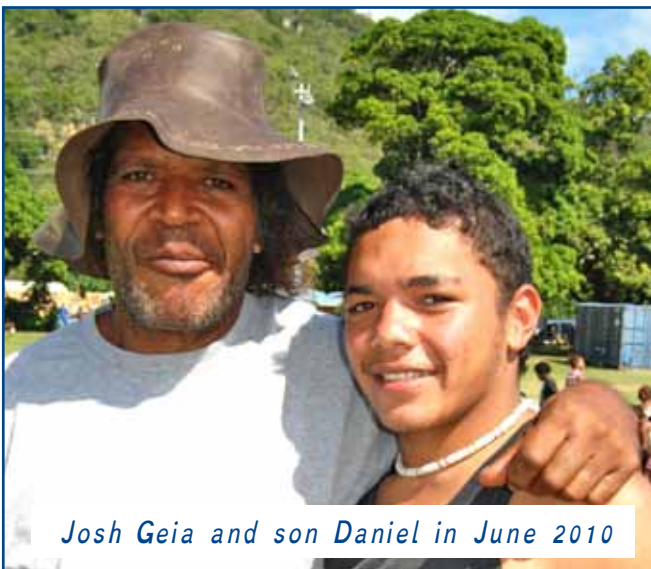
There was the late and great Eva Geia on the sideline beating her famous drum, which people still talk about now.

There was David Baira who lined up in the second row, and would then have



Margaret Conway, front left Reynard Baira and right Victor Daisy at the 2011 Cairns Allblacks





*Josh Geia and son Daniel in June 2010*



*Raynard Baira and David Baira in May 2011*

a “rest” out on the wing where the ball would be passed to him.

Almost every time, David would brush off defenders and score a four pointer.

Winger Hector Poynter was another champion Barracudas footballer and he often weaved his magic to score.

Palm truck driver Josh Geia was a genuine star and also represented North Queensland against New Zealand at Mackay, a game I also covered.

Algon Walsh jnr was as tough a forward as you would ever come across and this true blue gentleman has knee injuries to this day from his loyal service to the Barracudas.

There was Reynard Baira, the late Hosea Murphy who was known as the “Black Pearl” and numerous others.

Even before that I was fortunate enough to ‘hitch a ride’ with a gent named Bill Kiernan on a small plane to Palm one weekend afternoon when the football was on.

My children, who were very young at the time and are now aged 36 and 33, also came.

That day I snapped pics of legendary referee – the late and great Algon Walsh snr, touch judge Katie Seaton, the late star player John Baira with lots of youngsters around him, and heaps more.

The ground was packed and many of my pics ended up being published in the national magazine Rugby League Week.

I can’t wait for the 2014 TDRL season to kick off and the Barracudas will field a competitive team.

A look at the team sheet of the Palm United side which won the Yarrabah Allblacks carnival in October reveals a quality line up.

Roll on footy season.

**FOOTNOTE:** I have no doubt that PRO RATA of population, Palm Island would have the biggest following for football in Australia. If anybody doubts that look at how Palm hosted seven club sides in 2013 in its domestic competition. By comparison Townsville and District (including Charters Towers, Herbert River and Burdekin) with more than 200,000 people, had the same number of teams.

What we all hope for is the Barracudas be granted home matches on Palm in season 2015.



*Algon Walsh jnr, Loretta Prior & grandchild Jaaleigh Walsh in September 2011*



# Christmas Greetings from the Palm Island Voice!

Palm Island Mayor Alf Lacey says next year will be an exciting one with many new developments on the Island, He wishes all our community a joyful and Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year from himself, Melissa and family.

To the Palm Island Community and the Bwngcolman people, I would like to personally wish you and your family members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Stay safe and hope to see everyone again in the New Year...Deputy Mayor Roy Prior and family.

Coolgaree Aboriginal Corporation would like to thank the people & businesses of Palm Island for their support over 2013. We would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas, a safe holiday season and a healthy and peaceful New Year.

From the Cathy Freeman Foundation team, we thank the community of Palm, the schools, teachers, students, parents and carers, the Palm Island Council and other community members for your hard work and support this year. We congratulate Palm Island children for their fantastic academic achievements this year and look forward to even greater successes in 2014. Wishing you and your families a wonderful and joyous Christmas and happy New Year.

- **CONGRATULATIONS!** To Jennifer Bligh-Prior and Daniel Geia on your beautiful baby daughter. You have both made us very happy Grandparents! Love Bulloo Josh & Nan Paulette.
- Daniel Geia & Jennifer Bligh: Congratulations on your new baby daughter, we are so happy for you both. From Great Nan Janet & family (Mackay).
- Jennifer Bligh & Daniel Geia: We would like to congratulate you both on the arrival of your beautiful baby girl. Love From Aunts, Uncles & Cousins (Mackay, Brisbane, Sydney).
- To Our Baby Brother Daniel, congratulations on becoming a Dad, to a most precious & Beautiful baby Girl from Sista Megan & Brothers Josh, Caleb, Shadrack, Jayme.



## **PUBLICATION DETAILS:**

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## **Palm Island Voice**

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**MERRY CHRISTMAS**  
**& HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!!!**  
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