



## Leaders' meeting great success for Palm

Mayors, Councillors and CEOs from 17 Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities across the state were on Palm last week for the Local Government Association of Queensland's (LGAQ's) Indigenous Leaders' Forum.

A total of 66 delegates attended along with LGAQ President Margaret DeWit, staff and representatives and several others including Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships Curtis Pitt, Minister for Housing and Public Works, Leanne Enoch, Minister Assisting the Premier

on North Queensland Coralee O'Rourke, Police Commissioner Ian Stewart and their staff.

LGAQ President Margaret de Wit said the forum provided an opportunity for elected members from Queensland's 17 Indigenous councils to come together, identify common concerns and prioritise issues and strategies.

The forum agenda included discussion on increased economic participation, employment programs, housing and overcrowding, drug use in communities, and future of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Communities.



**MORE INSIDE!!!**





# Out & About @ ILF

Pics in this Issue by Alf & Joanne Wilson unless otherwise indicated.



Pic courtesy LGAQ



Pic courtesy LGAQ



Pic courtesy LGAQ





# Indigenous Leaders' Forum 'boost' for community

Palm Island Mayor Alf Lacey said hosting the ILF was a boost for the community.

"I was proud to showcase Palm Island as a welcoming, productive Queensland community," said Mayor Lacey.

"It's important we continue hosting forums in Indigenous communities so we can highlight the restraints and dissimilarities affecting our everyday way of life and service delivery, to ministers and visitors first-hand."

The ILF convened formally twice a year and was established by the LGAQ at the request of its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Council members.

Mayors in attendance included

Alf Lacey (Palm Island), Dereck Walpo (Aurukun), Ken Bone (Cherbourg), Errol Neal (Yarrabah), Cliff Harrigan (Wujal Wujal), Bernard Charlie (NPA), Wayne Butcher (Lockhart River), Philemon Mene (Napranum), Robert Holness (Kowanyama), Fred O'Keefe (Doomadgee), Peter Guivarra (Mapoon), Brad Wilson (Mornington Island), Richard Tarpencha (Pompuraaw), and Terry Munns (Woorabinda).

Torres Strait Island Regional Council was represented by Deputy Mayor Keith Fell and four Councillors.

Deputy Mayor Yen Loban and Cr Allan Ketchell represented the Torres Shire.

Hopevale CEO Ross Higgins attended for Mayor Greg McLean who could not attend because of illness.

Mayor Fred Gela and Torres Strait Shire Mayor Pedro Stephen could not make it because the Governor General was visiting their area.

*The following pages include excerpts from various statements released to the media by the LGAQ, Ministers Curtis Pitt and Leeanne Enoch and MP Bob Katter during and after the meeting.*



Back row L-R: Aurukun Mayor Dereck Walpo, Cherbourg Mayor Ken Bone, Yarrabah Mayor Errol Neal, Wujal Wujal Mayor Cliff Harrigan, NPA Mayor Bernard Charlie, Lockhart River Mayor Wayne Butcher, Brad Wilson. Front row L-R: Napranum Mayor Philemon Mene, Kowanyama Mayor Robert Holness, Woorabinda Mayor Terry Munns, LGAQ President Margaret de Witt, TSIRC Deputy Mayor Keith Fell, Police Commissioner Ian Stewart, Doomadgee Mayor Fred O'Keefe and Palm Mayor Alf Lacey

# Calls to close the gap on several issues

Queensland's Indigenous councils have called on the Palaszczuk Government to collaborate with them to 'close the gap' between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and other Australians.

The forum identified several issues to take up with the Government including adapting to climate change, housing, indigenous health, the review of alcohol management plans, subsidies for air and sea freight and tackling illicit drug use.

Lockhart River Mayor Wayne Butcher from Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council said



Aboriginal communities and councils had been researched and reviewed to death.

“What councils require now is action from the government to truly address ‘closing the gap’,” he said.

He said Councils called on the Government to genuinely respect the term ‘partnership’ and to work collaboratively

with them in every sense.

The LGAQ expected discussions to lead to some direct action, with councils and the Government working together to identify and implement solutions

to issues affecting indigenous communities.

The ILF meeting on Palm Island allowed the Government to fulfil its election promise of holding a ministerial round table with Indigenous leaders within its first 100 days in office.

*LGAQ MEDIA RELEASE*



# Councils should be at Referendum meeting

The Abbott Government should ensure Queensland's 17 Indigenous Councils are invited to attend a special meeting to discuss preparations for the referendum to formally recognise Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in the Australian Constitution.

The Indigenous Leaders Forum, meeting on Palm Island this week, passed a resolution calling on Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Opposition Leader Bill Shorten to include ‘democratically elected leaders’ of Indigenous communities in a 6 July meeting in Sydney to

discuss the referendum.

The meeting will involve about 40 Indigenous representatives but there is no indication that Queensland's Indigenous councils will be invited.

Local Government Association of Queensland President Margaret de Wit said

Indigenous councils should be represented at the meeting.

“They are democratically elected by their communities to speak and act on behalf of their communities,” Cr de Wit said. “Their voices should be heard at such a crucial meeting.” *LGAQ MEDIA RELEASE*



## Subdivision tree planting to celebrate success



Palm Island has celebrated the start of final works on its new \$14.9 million subdivision, delivered through the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing.

Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Partnerships Curtis Pitt planted a native *Eucalyptus Tessellaris* at the 59 lot subdivision during the ILF meeting.

“We’re now ready to start the final land preparation work here, with bitumen road sealing to start within the fortnight and then landscaping can start,” he said.

“The clear-felling, surveying and sewage works to date have employed 25 locals, giving them skills across a range of roles and the community can take pride in this project.

“The contractors, Hutchinson and Mendi, have given those local employees opportunities to work as plant operators, general labourers, security guards, foremen and concreters.

“In doing this we’re developing the skill base of locals to contribute to the island’s economy while the wages of those local employees remain in their community with their families on Palm Island.

“The Federal Government has allocated additional funds to deliver 20 new dwellings here once the land preparation works are complete, with the contracts to construct a number of those houses already awarded to the local council.

“The new subdivision will deliver much-needed social housing for the local community, as well as providing increased and ongoing employment for locals during their construction. Three local Palm Island residents were employed into full-time civil traineeships on graduating Year

12 when earthworks on the subdivision began in 2014.”

Work on the subdivision is roughly 80 per cent complete and due to be finished at the end of June. Mr Pitt said he was passionate about creating sustainable, long-lasting careers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers.

“Governments have a vital role to play in continuing to invest in the future viability of our Indigenous communities,” the Minister said.

“Earlier this week I announced 14 new positions for women in Woorabinda to work as haul truck operators in the Curragh North Coal Mine and last week we committed \$1.1 million for social housing projects in Wujal Wujal to start work on developing eight new housing lots.”

# Focus on Economic Development

Minister for Housing & Public Works and Minister for Science & Innovation, Leeanne Enoch said in a statement that last week's Ministerial Discussion session at the Indigenous Leaders' Forum on Palm Island had been a great opportunity to discuss some important issues.

Minister Enoch joined Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Curtis Pitt, and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland, Coralee O'Rourke, for the meeting with representatives from state's 17 Indigenous councils.

"This was an opportunity for those councils to raise issues directly with myself and my Cabinet colleagues," Ms Enoch said.

"An issue raised with me several times was one that I've also spoken about in Parliament recently –

that's the uncertainty about the National Partnership Agreement on Remote and Indigenous Housing (NPARIH) following the cuts in the recent Federal Budget.

"These Federal cuts to the Property and Tenancy management program equate to more than \$26 million cut from Queensland's remote Indigenous communities.

"A significant proportion of this funding had been used to grow capability in local communities, support local jobs and businesses, and help communities move one step closer to being sustainable.

"These cuts are a step backwards at a time when we need to be striving ahead, and I will continue to call on the Federal Government to reconsider them."

Ms Enoch said other issues raised in her portfolio included home ownership as well as maintenance and upgrade concerns.

"These are all complex issues that we aren't going to solve overnight. But as a Government we are committed to working with local communities, and yesterday's meeting was part of that process," she said.

Economic development and jobs were among the key priorities at the Indigenous Leaders' Forum and Ministerial Roundtable on Palm Island last week Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships Curtis Pitt said in a statement.

Mr Pitt attended the Roundtable, along with Mayors from Queensland's Indigenous communities.

"This Roundtable is about building stronger communities and providing Indigenous Queenslanders with more economic opportunities and better local services," he said.

"It's also about honouring a key election commitment we made to meet with Indigenous leaders face to face and hear about the issues that matter

most to them.

"We need to explore new ways to strengthen local economies and social infrastructure, in a way that creates jobs and increases economic participation in these communities.

"We also need to ensure that Indigenous communities are getting the funding they need for housing, health and education services, and for community safety.

"I'll be listening very closely

to what our Indigenous leaders have to say on these matters and taking their feedback to the Premier and my Cabinet colleagues.

"I want to see the entire State Cabinet working together to improve services and deliver better outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders."

Mr Pitt said it was fitting that the Palm Island Indigenous Roundtable took place during National Reconciliation Week.





Katter's Australian Party (KAP) Federal Leader and Member for Kennedy Bob Katter used his address to a meeting of Indigenous Council leaders on Palm Island to highlight the case for Title Deeds to be issued to First Australians to address the fundamental issue of lagging economic development, he said in a statement.

“The biggest issue holding First Australians back is the issue of definitive ownership, which is Title Deeds,” Mr Katter said.

“There is no other way that job creation and development can occur.

“It is the same as every other business venture in Australian history – if they want to borrow from a bank, the bank wants the security of a Title Deed for mortgage ability.

“Yet First Australians remain the only people on earth that can't get a Title Deed to own their own home.”

During Mr Katter's time as Minister for Aboriginal Affairs in Queensland during the 1980s nearly 1,000 title deeds were issued to First Australians and First Australian communities, yet in the intervening 25 years less

than two dozen have been issued.

“The Cape York Peninsula is bigger than and has over twice the rainfall of Victoria,” Mr Katter said. “Victoria has seven million head of cattle which brings in \$4,000 million a year to their economy.

“But we have got under 100,000 head of cattle now at Cape York.

“Real ownership of the land through a Title Deed is the only thing that will allow First Australians to borrow money for development of this kind.”

Mr Katter hit out at successive Governments who had failed to grant Title Deeds to First Australians.

“As a Nation we should be utterly ashamed of our Governments, their performance in this area is nothing less than despicable.

“Less than two dozen Title Deeds have been issued in the last 25 years, whereas I issued nearly 1,000 Title Deeds when I was the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

“We've now got diabetes in epidemic proportions, malnutrition by another name, as First Australians haven't got enough money to buy fresh fruit and vegetables.

“I for one am sick of it, the Governments have done nothing about it and quite frankly we need to do it ourselves.

“Billy Gordon and the KAP State Members Shane Knuth and Robbie Katter are as powerful as the Government in Queensland and I don't doubt that they will use their power to deliver here.

“If the State Government wants a contest, we'll see you in the ring,” Mr Katter said.

# Open Days continue to attract visitors

Last month's second Open Day for 2015 was a great success with more than 100 people checking out local culture, food, craft and entertainment.

During the 90 minute ferry trip visitors were told about the history and beauty of the island and the friendly people by Mayor Alf Lacey over the loudspeaker.

Upon arrival they walked to Frederick William Clay Park where they were greeted with music and a host of craft and food stalls.

Allan Palm Island welcomed guests to country.

Deputy Mayor Frank Conway strummed his guitar as part of the entertainment group Mother's Dust.

Some of the tourists came from as far away as Perth and said they enjoyed the day.

Tourists were asked to fill in feedback forms on the return 4.30pm ferry.

"We got some very positive feedback which was great," Consultant Allison Rossetto said.

Shadow Tourism Minister Jann Stuckey was just one of several visitors who took the opportunity to visit the Island.

Ms Stuckey said the LNP had a strong focus on growing and developing indigenous tourism opportunities, particularly on Palm Island.

"Research shows that tourists are crying out for authentic Indigenous cultural experiences and here in Queensland we have an abundance of rich offerings," she said.

"That's why the LNP worked hard to support Palm Island unlock its full potential."

Ms Stuckey said Palm Island Mayor Alf Lacey had expressed his frustration about previous failed attempts made over many

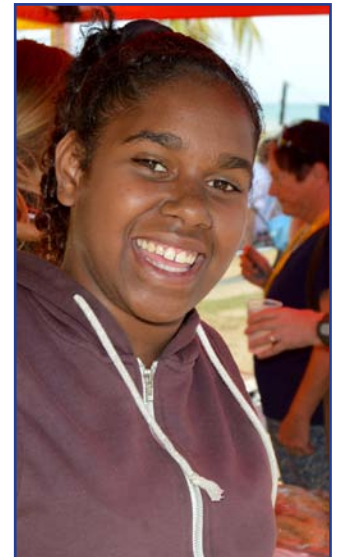


years to stimulate tourism activities on this island.

"As the Tourism Minister in the LNP Government, I worked closely with the Palm Island Tourism and Transport Committee, Palm Island Council, Sealink, Townsville Enterprise and other stakeholders to initiate the inaugural Open Day on Palm Island in 2014," she said.

"The first Open Day saw more than 200 visitors welcomed to the island, where they participated in tour packages and engaged with local elders.





“It was a resounding success and since then, the community has undertaken educational programs and worked on developing tourism products such as community markets, cultural walking tours and art displays.

“Now it’s up to the Palaszczuk–Gordon Government to provide the necessary resources and support to enable this community to nurture its unique identity and unleash its true potential.”

Member for Burdekin Dale Last said Palm Island was

starting to shine for all the right reasons.

“Palm is an island rich in culture and tourists are just starting to discover this North Queensland hidden beauty,” Mr Last said. “Tourism is the first step in economic development on Palm Island and full credit goes to those involved in encouraging sustainable tourism and business to the benefit of locals and visitors alike.”



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### Issue No. Deadline / Publication

181	Thursday 11 June / 18 June
182	Thursday 25 June / 2 July
183	Thursday 9 July / 16 July
184	Thursday 23 July / 30 July
185	Thursday 6 August / 13 August
186	Thursday 20 August / 27 August
187	Thursday 3 September / 10 September

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188	Thursday 17 September / 24 September
189	Thursday 1 October / 8 October
190	Thursday 15 October / 22 October
191	Thursday 29 October / 5 November
192	Thursday 12 November / 19 November
193	Thursday 26 November / 3 December
194	Thursday 10 December / 17 December

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# Live long and healthy

*Neilene and Leon Tromp moved to Palm Island from Hervey Bay to continue the work of Medical Missionary Training Institute.*

*Palm Island Voice will publish semi-regular columns from them covering different, easy and natural ways to implement change into your lifestyle that seem small but can make a huge difference to your future health and longevity.*

In our first health column (Issue 176) we discussed 'NEW START' and the meaning of each letter and in this issue we are going to focus on the 'N' for Nutrition. Nutrition, of course, is what we choose to put into our body to feed the needs (not the wants) for ultimate health and lifestyle.

Food that is nutritious is essential for the daily fueling of our bodies.

So where do we start?

After waking each morning have a glass of water or two, if possible with a squeeze of lemon juice, and drink this at



least half an hour before food.

This is to be taken before breakfast not instead of breakfast – remember, breakfast is the most important meal of the day.

Next choose a healthy nutritious breakfast that is low sugar, low fat, high fibre and minimum processed cereal.

A good breakfast will fill,

energise and satisfy you until lunchtime and your stomach will get a rest between meals which is necessary for good digestion.

Make a new resolution, start your day the right way and eat your way back to good habits and good health.

For recipes or help and nutritional tips feel free to contact us Neilene and Leon Tromp at the Medical Missionary Training Institute on 0427 737 580.

Watch for our next column and let us help you reverse or prevent lifestyle diseases with some more simple dietary changes.



PALM Island boxers Craig Evers, Chris Evers jnr, Daniel Nomoa and Reggie Palm Island (pictured) all won gold medals at a Boxing Association tournament in Cairns last month.

Quietly spoken Daniel won a unanimous points win over Nathaniel Armstrong from Cloncurry in 36kg class.

Trainer Chris Evers Snr said it was Daniel's third fight in the 32kg division and he defeated his opponent in front of an 800-strong crowd.

"Daniel is the grandson of John and Ben Nomoa and is an excellent boxer with power," he said.

"That was his second win and I feel he could potentially win the Queensland Title this year.

'He has a bright future in the sport and is proud of his NPA and TS heritage."

Reggie Palm Island beat a NSW



opponent in the 52kg class.

"The referee put three eight second counts on the boxer Reggie defeated and he was knocked down twice," he said.

"It was an impressive performance and he now fights for Australia at the AIS in a few weeks time."

Chris jnr, aged 12, continued on his winning way in the 38kg category winning an unanimous points decision over Charlie Bell from Moranbah.

Craig, aged 10, also scored a unanimous points win over Brody Mayocchi from Cairns in the 32kg class.

## New look Palm Island Community Rugby League season kicks off

PREMIERS Butler Bay Bulls beat Skipjacks 52-38 in the opening round of a new season of domestic rugby league games.



Geia Jnr (above) who said he missed the first round but has signed with Bulls.

In the other match Jets won on forfeit from Bwngcolman Brothers.

The new administration body is called Palm Island Community Rugby League with Algon Walsh Jnr as president.

*Palm Island Voice* spoke to several players whilst on Palm including champion Obe

Skipjacks star Anthony Thompson and his mate Kevin Wilson who plays for Brothers were sitting under Palm's 'Tree of Knowledge', near the walking bridge over from the CBD (pictured right).

"We are mates but not on the football field," Anthony said.

