



Palm Island Voice



Issue 91
Thursday 3 November 2011

Your Community
Your Newsletter
Your Voice

\$1.25

Will Patrick's Olympic dream come true?



GIFTED Palm Island boxer Patrick Clarke has a burning ambition to represent Australia at the next Olympic Games.

The 18-year-old Patrick is pictured here in front of a mural of an Aboriginal boxer accompanied by an apt caption which is on the side wall of the PCYC gym.

"It would be great if I could make it and I would be representing my people on Palm Island which I love," he said.

Patrick competes in the light welter weight 64kg division and had had 38 fights for 20 wins. His trainer Ray Dennis said that many of the losses could have gone either way.

"Ten of Patrick's wins have been by either knockout or TKO when he has stopped the opponents inside the distance, he is a very talented boxer," Mr Dennis said.

Patrick is highly respected by his club mates, opponents and officials.

Mr Dennis said that Patrick would have his chance to be selected in the Australian team for the 2012 London Olympics.

"He will be travelling to Beenleigh for the State Association Olympic trials on December 10 and 11 and if he wins will qualify for the National trials," Mr Dennis said. Patrick will also be part of a strong Palm Island team set to fight in Charters Towers this month.

NEXT ISSUE!
YARRABAH FOOTY ROUND-UP: TWO PALM TEAMS PLAY FOR BISHOP ARTHUR MALCOLM SHIELD

Fantome movie up for documentary award



Fantome Island - the movie - is up against three other Australian films and several international entries in a brand new documentary competition being held at this year's Brisbane International Film Festival.

Pictured above are filmmakers Sean Gilligan and Adrian Strong with a boatload of Palm Islanders who travelled to Fantome for the historical Remembrance ceremony – which was filmed as part of the documentary – in June last year.

Between 1939 and 1973

Fantome Island was a leprosarium for Aboriginal people suffering from the disease.

Some passengers on the emotionally-charged 45 minute journey had been former-patients or workers on the Island.

They included 71-year-old Joe

Eggmolsse who was a patient on Fantome between 1945 and 1956 and the major subject of the documentary.

The BIFFDOCS award has a \$25 000 prize making it the richest documentary competition in Australia. Winners will be announced within the next week or two.



Doing their bits for the community are
Left: John Oliffe pictured next to one of Palm Island's fire trucks and
Right: Ili Dabea next to the SES
2 *vehicle*



Stand-by generators to ease power pressure

State and Federal Governments have agreed to partner with the Palm Island Council on a \$115,000 project to provide stand-by generators to power essential services in times of natural disasters, Member for Townsville Mandy Johnstone announced last week.

"When a cyclone approaches and then crosses the coast, electricity is usually one of the first services to be cut, which can hamper the delivery of essential services to the community," Ms Johnstone said.

"In order to make Palm Island more resilient to natural disasters, the Council applied for funding from the Natural Disaster Resilience Program to purchase stand-by generators to power essential services until the power supply can be restored."

Ms Johnstone said the Palm Island stand-by generator project was one of 56 projects state-wide to receive funding through the third round of the Natural Disaster Resilience Program.

Agreement promises more control over primary health care services

Minister for Indigenous Health Warren Snowdon and Queensland Minister for Health Geoff Wilson have welcomed Palm Island's commitment towards taking more direct involvement in primary health care services with the signing of a Statement of Intent last month.

The Statement commits the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council, the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC), and the Queensland and Australian Governments to the development of a comprehensive, long term plan of action targeting areas of need and addressing existing inequities in health services on Palm Island.

At the signing ceremony Queensland's Minister for Health Geoff Wilson also launched the Palm Island Health Action Plan (PIHAP) with Mayor Lacey, which was about delivering more services closer to home for the Palm Island community. Mr Lacey voiced his support for the plan.

"We welcome this historic and ground breaking plan and we share a strong commitment towards closing the health gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the rest of Queensland," he said. "A healthy Palm Island is a part of our community's vision and this is just the first step towards achieving good health for our people."

Mr Snowdon said this commitment to a regional approach to planning and delivering health services would contribute to the Australian Government's historic national health reforms, as well as its ongoing commitment to closing the gap in health outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and non-indigenous Australians.

"The ultimate aim is to provide Palm Island residents with better health services while also enhancing and empowering the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce to play an active role in improving local health. The Statement will further the aspirations of the Palm Island community to strengthen their direct involvement in designing, developing and providing their own primary health care services."

Mr Wilson said improving health was a government priority. "Improving the general health and life expectancy for people on Palm Island is a significant Queensland Government priority which will receive greater attention through the plan," he said.

State Member for Townsville, Mandy Johnstone, welcomed this funding.

"This investment into the health of the Palm Island community will deliver services that will keep people healthy in their communities," she said.

...Out & About...



Above: Deputy Mayor Ray Sibley having a quick yarn with former league great Steve Renouf while he was 'out and about' last month.

Hopes high for justice as stolen wages case progresses

Palm Islanders who are owed Stolen Wages by the State Government will follow a test case court case involving a claimant from Yarrabah with extreme interest.

About 80 men and women attended a meeting at St Teresa's Church in Townsville organised by the Queensland Council of Unions last month to discuss the coming trial.

A similar meeting was due to be held on Palm Island the following day but was cancelled.

Another will go ahead on the Island on a date yet to be determined.

The theme of the Townsville meeting, which was attended by some Palm Islanders, was "It Is

Time To Settle".

The audience heard QCU legals have finalised their statement of claim for a test trial which is on behalf stolen wages claimant Uncle Conrad Yeatman.

A date for the trial is expected to be known soon.

Uncle Conrad was a former carpenter and labourer in Queensland who had his wages withheld from him since he began work at 14.

...Continued Next Page...

Cowboys' Legend program offering job shots for students

Opportunities for Palm Island secondary school students have expanded into more career path options with thanks at least in part to the Toyota North Queensland Cowboys' innovative Learn Earn Legend Program.

This program gives students the chance to move straight into the workforce once they finish their schooling.

It is with the participation of companies like Townsville-based ferry company Sealink coming on board as a Cowboys "Learn Earn Legend employment partner", that the gap is being closed between Indigenous and non-indigenous employment levels.

More than 30 schools including Kirwan High and from Weipa to Sarina, and Cairns, the Atherton Tablelands, Charters Towers and Mount Isa were invited to Sealink's Townsville headquarters beside Ross Creek last month to see Shalom College grade 12 student Rosina Anau (pictured on the Sealink catamaran Fantome Cat in Ross Creek with Queensland General Manager Jeff Davey and program co-ordinator Ryan Mahoney) take up her chance

in the program.

Rosina will be offered a career/traineeship in a customer service related role for Sealink when she completes school.

On the day she was shown what her career will entail by Sealink Queensland General

Manager Jeff Davey, State Operations Manager Gareth Preston, Joe Christiansen from Shalom College, Cowboys community manager Fiona Pelling and Learn Earn Legend project coordinator Ryan Mahoney.

Sealink has promised more school-based and full-time traineeships for Indigenous students as part of the program in the near future and said they shared the Cowboys' commitment to closing the gap between Indigenous and non-indigenous employment.

"Being part of the Cowboys



Learn Earn Legend Program provides Sealink with a platform to access a group of young work ready Indigenous youth who are keen for the opportunity to prove themselves in the work arena," Ms Pelling said.

She urged more businesses to get involved to give youth Indigenous youths career opportunities.

"We are lucky to have many like-minded organisations supporting this initiative and providing these valuable opportunities for our program participants," she said.

...From Previous Page...

His story is one of hundreds the QCU has heard from claimants in its travels around Indigenous communities but proved to be one of the strongest in terms of evidence and was chosen to be the pivotal test case it is hoped will clear the way for justice for everyone concerned.

QCU Secretary Ron Monaghan said setting of a trial date will be a welcome step towards making the Queensland government move toward addressing injustices of the past. "Stolen Wages claimants have fought long and hard for wages justice, and the QCU will continue to offer them every possible assistance to achieve their goal," Mr Monaghan said.

During question time from the audience Mr Monaghan was asked by local Townsville and Aboriginal Islander Health Service Stolen Wages Councillor Genevieve Meldrum whether entitlements would be passed onto children of claimants if they died before receiving the money.

"It is a grey area but the indications point to that they will not," Mr Monaghan said.

That prompted other members of the audience to express in strong terms that in such cases, money owed should be treated as normal inheritances.

Darren Butler was there with his father Russell Butler and said in the case of claimants dying, the payments should go to the next of kin.

"It is an inheritance," Darren Butler said.

Respected Palm elder Aunty Mary Twaddle, aged 82, has been a staunch stolen wages campaign supporter after still being owed money from her younger days on Palm and later working on stations.

"I fear all of us older people will die before the money is paid," Aunty Mary said.

Palm Island-born Fay Thimble said she was also owed wages and hoped the State Government would rule that descendants of claimants who die can be paid.

Mary Wales, now 74, lived on Fantome Island and later Palm Island and said it was interesting to hear about the trial.

Mr Monaghan told the audience that candidates in the coming State election were being asked where they stood on stolen wages.

Mr Monaghan said that repaying the stolen wages was a key plank of the Charter for Working Queenslanders during a union Week of Action.

"Queensland workers will not stand by and see fellow workers being denied their correct entitlements," he said.

"The trade union movement is pleased to be able to assist Uncle Conrad in his quest to gain wage justice and in the process, offer hope to all those workers whose wages were stolen."

Renowned poet Coralie Cassidy read one of her works on the subject entitled "A Lousy Little Offer" to the meeting.



Pictured: Top Union official Les Moffitt and Ron Monaghan speaking; Above: Aunty Mary Twaddle; Below: Palm island born Fay Thimble, left, and Catherine Thimble-Bollen at the meeting and Bottom: Left: poet Coralie Cassidy and Right: former Fantome Island resident Mary Wales





Left: Palm Island's Barracudas u-18 side and Above: the Prior boys (pics courtesy Palm Island Mayor Alf Lacey)
Below: Barracudas teams & supporters (pics by Christine Howes)



PALM Island Barracudas under-18 side gained valuable experience at the Cairns Allblacks carnival last month.

Team official Roy Prior said the young players did really well despite not winning any games. "They were very physical games and the boys can be proud of their efforts," he said. "There are two things we can take from the weekend, one being the inclusion of a few new players who have not played mainstream before and their presence can only be a good thing for the future of Palm Island rugby league. "Also the players will only get better for the experience. "The more exposure we give our juniors the better players they will become, I think it's

important that the team as a whole get recognition for the efforts, but a few did stand out and really led the team around." He said some of the standout players included Thomas Massey, David Sam, Simeon Oui-Blackman, James Sibley, John Henry-Prior, Nui Geia, Genami Geia (jnr), Thomas Lloyd Morgan and Robert Martin. Mr Prior wanted to thank volunteers and sponsors which made the trip possible. "We wouldn't have been able to do it if it wasn't for their efforts," he said. "And also I would like to thank our bus driver Steven Boyd for giving his time to help out, and also to my two offsiders Fred Haines snr and my Uncle Edward Prior snr.

"We made a pact a few years ago to try and keep our juniors coming through and as you know for the last few years Fred and I have been taking the under 18 side to Cairns. "There is a bit of talk being thrown around that Palm Island Barracudas is dead and buried and the players now don't have any pride in the jersey and just go away for a boys weekend away – I would like to think that is not the case as our juniors show plenty of ticker and pride in wearing the green and gold we will only get better if we can get them to stay together." The Barracudas U18s were sponsored by Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council, Coolgaree CDEP and the Palm Island Rugby League Committee.

PALM Island Barracudas men and ladies sides travelled to Cairns in mid October for the biggest Allblacks carnival held in North Queensland during 2011.

The Palm Island Barracudas were one of 26 sides in the men's A Grade division.

Co-coaches were respected island football identities Fred Bulsey and Lloyd Morgan.

The Barracudas lost their two games at the October 15 and 16 carnival held at the Mann Street Cairns Junior Rugby League grounds.

They played Cape York Clusters premiers Kowanyama Wallabies, which had finished in the top eight at Cairns the previous year, and Torres Strait team Coconut Island.

Mr Bulsey nominated forward Costa Sam, fullback Esrom

Geia, winger Kevin Morgan and utility Clint Barry as standouts.

Curacoa Crusaders with players from Palm Island also competed in the blue ribbon men's section. Badu Island side Argun Warriors defeated East Coast Dolphins 32-24 in the grand final before a huge crowd. In the semi finals Argun Warriors defeated Curacoa Crusaders and East Coast Dolphins rolled a Yarrabah side.

A Palm Island Barracudettes sides was in the ladies competition and the girls played well without reaching the grand final.

There were five women's teams with the Coastal Tiddas defeated Lightning Storm in the grand final. Ten under-18 teams battled it out with Kantok beating Badu United 31-18 in the final.

Many Palm Islanders were there supporting the teams and players.

FULL SET OF ACTION SHOTS NEXT ISSUE!!!



Palm Island Voice

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MANDY JOHNSTONE MP Member for Townsville



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Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council

**is closed every second Friday
(Council pay week) for RDO.**

The next RDO is Friday 11 November.

**For emergencies on a Friday
please call 0458 789 011**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
THE COUNCIL ON 4770 1177**

POSITION VACANT: INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE CENTRE

The Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council has a permanent part-time position with the Indigenous Knowledge Centre.

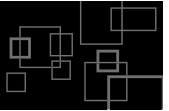
The successful applicant must be prepared to travel and undergo training.

The position will require some flexibility with hours and may include weekend shifts.

An information package containing position description, selection criteria may be obtained from Reception, Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council.

Written applications with a completed selection criteria should be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer, Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council, Post Office, Palm Island.

Applications close 11th November 2011



Do you want to make a difference in your community?

Become a councillor by standing in the Queensland local government elections on **Saturday 31 March 2012.**

Register to attend a free *How do I become a local councillor?* information session at:

Palm Island PCYC, Wednesday 16 November, 10:30am – 12:30pm

There are three easy ways to register:

- online at www.dlgp.qld.gov.au/council-elections
- print out, complete and return a registration form (from the same site)
- call 4799 7379.

Get involved!

www.dlgp.qld.gov.au/council-elections



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Happy Birthday!!!

HAPPY 4TH BIRTHDAY FOR

JAYDEN ROBIN JAMES GEIA for 31 OCTOBER

HAPPY 1ST BIRTHDAY TO **MICKAEL AARON**

JAMES SIBLEY JNR for 4 NOVEMBER

From Nani George, Popi Tolowah, Mum, Uncle Kealy, Aunty Resj, Uncle James, Uncle Obe, Auntie Marina & your brothers and sisters.

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Dear Editor

It is with sadness that I write to advise your many readers that I will be departing their beautiful Island during the early part of November as a result of accepting a promotion to Brisbane.

Many of you will remember that I was back and forward from Palm Island before commencing here full time in January 2005.

It was a difficult start and I wouldn't want to do it again but I am pleased to say that while we can't change the past we have come a long way and can influence the future.

Historically there has been cause for disharmony between police and Indigenous people but it has always been my view that contact with the police in these places now is more a symptom of other problems than a will to be over represented in the justice system.

Unfortunately though it is the relationship with police that dominates media attention and therefore public perception which is why I have always tried to paint a positive picture on Palm in my dealing with the media.

Can I also ask you to remember that the police don't make the laws we enforce and we have had a lot of good police come through the place wanting to do their bit in trying to help the community.

There is more stability in the police on the Island than there has ever been before and after I leave there are several still here that have extended their stay.

I suspect that will continue to happen in the future.

Policing in communities is not an easy job and policing anywhere can be a bit like refereeing football where half the crowd is always unhappy when you have to make a decision.

It's part of being in a public position that you can't keep everyone happy all the time but in leaving I can say that I have always

Palm Island PCYC is calling for Community Volunteers

If you have a gift or a talent you would love to share and pass on to our children as a way of contributing to your community, then why not volunteer!

Please feel free to see any of our friendly staff at the PCYC or ask to speak with Sgt Bernard Mead about how you can help.

The December/January school holidays are coming up and once again PICC, PCYC and other agencies passionate about engaging our youth and children will be running activities.

Watch this space, once the program is finalised, you will be informed!!!

tried to be fair and honest with everyone and in everything I have done. I have never lived anywhere else this long and Palm has been as much a home to me as anywhere else.

It's been a large part of my professional and personal life with many great experiences and memories.

The Island and the people and the lifestyle are genuinely hard to leave and I will always have an interest in what happens here.

There are so many good people but I would especially like to thank all those who have taken me and those closest to me into their homes, their families and their lives.

It has been the friendships and learning about some of the history and dynamics that have made it a home for me.

I hope our paths cross again and have no doubt that there will be many times in the future I will wish I was back on Palm.

I could go on for much longer but really I just want to say goodbye, best wishes and thanks for having me.

**Yours sincerely
Paul James**

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Another close finish in Cardwell for Jets

Home side Pirates looked to be in cruise control when they led 28-12 at half time but Palm Island competition premiers Jets had other ideas, only just losing in the end, at 36-34.

Jets faced an enormous disadvantage because the game clashed with the Yarrabah Allblacks carnival in which the Palm Island Barracudas fielded two sides drawing some of the players. The game was played over four 20 minute quarters because of the heat with the temperature reaching 30 degrees.

Jets started well, spurred on by their huge number of supporters who had travelled to Cardwell from Palm to cheer them on.

Crafty halfback Clinton Pearson scored in the opening minutes and the conversion by Tabua Oui saw them lead 6-nil.

However Pirates rallied and looked set to run away with the game but the courage and ability of the Jets players came to the fore.

These games have a history of being



close – last year the game finished in a 34-all draw. Palm Island supporter Zac Sam said the game was played hard on the field but in good spirit.

UNDER 18 GAME

In the under 18 match Girringun Pirates beat Palm island Barracudas 14-10.

"It was a great game, we were down on a few numbers and our boys did really well," said Barracudas captain Kenny Wilson.

Mr Phillip Rist CEO of the Girringun

Corporation said resilience was a key factor in keeping communities healthy, and events like this bring the community together.

"I would like to acknowledge and thank our countrymen on Palm Island for allowing us to have the game back on Girringun territory," he said. With a smile he added, "remember that on the football paddock we are mortal enemies who will fight to the death to retain the Jack Henry and Joe Romelo Memorial Shield."



Nail-biting finish for Pirates/Jets showdown



Palm island Jets produced an amazing second half comeback which took them close to scoring a stunning victory in the Jack Henry and Joe Romelo Memorial rugby league match against Giringun Pirates at Cardwell last Saturday.

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Pictured: Above: Moa Sam runs the ball for Jets in the A Grade game; Right: Jets Costa Sam tackled and Below: Algon Walsh speaks to Jets players at half time



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Palm Island Voice

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Thursday 24 November

Thursday 8 December

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

PUBLICATION DATE

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Thursday 1 December

Thursday 15 December