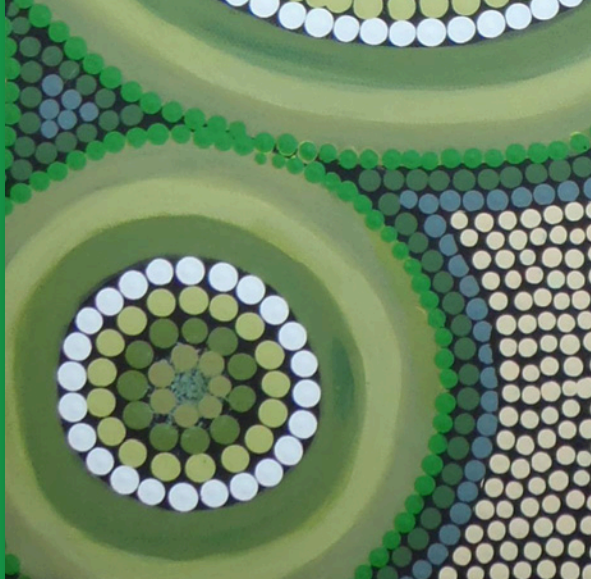


Local Aboriginal
Land Council

NEWSLETTER

Issue 06



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THE DARKINJUNG DISPATCH

THIS PLACE

Since the dawning of time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been naming places that are sacred and Bulgandry is one such site of significance.



Welcome

It was around this time two years ago when we first asked members to go gently on us as we fought to conduct business as usual under exceptionally trying circumstances.

Little did we know then that COVID under its many guises would still be making its presence felt more than 24 months later. Add to this a fair bit of adverse weather and it's safe to say that it sometimes feels like our lucky country is not so lucky after all.

Yet the role we hold both as a council and a community group means that we don't get the chance to sit back and feel sorry for ourselves. Instead circumstance has dictated that we continue to lead from the front when it comes to strengthening and empowering our community for our people - past, present and future.

While it may appear that all has been quiet on the home front, this could not be further from the truth.

As you will read in this edition of the Dispatch, in recent months we have signed a statement of intent to negotiate the potential transfer of Peat Island and furthered discussions around the possible development of an Aboriginal Discovery Centre, Indigenous Walking Path and cultural tourism opportunities on the site.

In addition, we have forged ahead with plans for NAIDOC Week 2022, hosted visits from the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) where we afforded a cultural tour of Bulgandry Aboriginal Place and Peat island on Darkinjung country and taken part in the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations (CAPO) Closing the Gap community consultation series

It appears we will be kept just as busy in upcoming weeks as we do our best to ensure our members voices continue to be represented in areas of cultural and heritage importance.

ON OUR COVER



Situated in the Brisbane Water National Park, Bulgandry is home to rock carvings depicting the story of Baiyami, the creator.

Uncle Gavi Duncan, DLALC Chairperson Barry Duncan and CEO Brendan Moyle recently had the honour of hosting the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) for a cultural tour of Bulgandry Aboriginal Place and Peat island on Darkinjung country.



PEAT ISLAND STATEMENT OF INTENT

Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council's (DLALC) vision to make Peat Island the centrepiece of Australia's cultural tourism received a major boost recently after the NSW Government agreed to negotiate about potentially transferring the ownership of the island back to its original custodians.

The two parties have signed a statement of intent to negotiate the potential transfer of the parcel of land which is sited near Mooney Mooney by the Hawksbury River.

The island and its surrounds are deemed to have significant Aboriginal and European heritage and as such are subject to a land claim by DLALC which seeks to use it to further economic and cultural opportunities for the local Aboriginal community and all Australians.

Plans that are being discussed include the possible development of an Aboriginal Discovery Centre, Indigenous Walking Path and cultural tourism opportunities that will capture and help preserve the rich Aboriginal cultural heritage on and surrounding the island.

The announcement was made during a special presentation at the site, attended by representatives of DLALC and local and state government officials. Kevin 'Uncle Gavi' Duncan also conducted a smoking ceremony at the announcement.

The island is the site of a former asylum that was opened in 1911 and decommissioned in 2010. It has remained used since.

DLALC chief executive Brendan Moyle believes the island could be the jewel in the crown of the Aboriginal land rights movement.



"The benefits that we can actually create here are not just for the Aboriginal people but for all Australians. Showcasing, preserving and celebrating the ancient history, the contemporary Aboriginal history, and the modern history of non-indigenous Australia."

NSW Minister for Planning and Homes Anthony Roberts says the statement of intent marked another step forward in reconciliation, with the NSW Government recognising the significance of Peat Island, in both its indigenous and European histories, and the impact it has had on all Australians over the past 100 years.

"Working with Darkinjung LALC gives us the opportunity to partner with a grassroots community organisation to pay respects to these shared histories," he says.

DLALC and the NSW government will continue working through the planning processes, including community consultation.

STATEMENT ON ABORIGINALITY AND CULTURAL AUTHORITY ISSUED

A surge in attacks from misinformed members of the public has forced DLALC (Darkinjung) to issue a statement outlining what constitutes cultural authority and legitimate Aboriginality.

The board also made a statement denouncing what it called “the current vitriol” being directed at its membership and instead praised the sensational work being carried out by its staff.

DLALC chief executive Brendan Moyle says recent press has seen an increase in attacks on Darkinjung and non-Aboriginal people, politicians and institutions that work with the organisation.

Understanding Aboriginality and cultural authority is a topic that is continuing to grow in our communities across the Central Coast, across New South Wales, and across Australia, he says.

“Most unfortunate is seeing the tirades being directed by non-Indigenous people within this.”

In an attempt to address the issue, the statement outlined what the term traditional ownership actually means in relation to the Native Title Act 1993 as well as breaking down the differences between land rights and native title.

In addition, he also offered a step by step breakdown of the definition of Aboriginality as it relates to the law.

Having heritage alone does not make you an Aboriginal person, he says.

“It means that you have some heritage but does not necessarily mean that you are an

Aboriginal person. People suddenly finding out about long lost ancestry or had not identified or lived as an Aboriginal person are unlikely to be determined as an Aboriginal person under the legislative instruments,” he says Mr Moyle says people who are not accepted as an Aboriginal person through the legal processes, including community acceptance by legitimate community-controlled organisations, are not legally Aboriginal people.

He says unfortunately the number of non-Indigenous Australians aligning themselves to these people, attack legitimate Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and community members often including recognised elders.

Local Aboriginal Land Councils are often the focus of these attacks as they try to build a future for the legitimate aboriginal community and are exercising their legislated functions in

a way that these people don’t want, he says.

“If you are attacking the identity and aspiration of those legitimate Aboriginal people, you are in fact engaging in racial discrimination and vilification,” Mr Moyle says.

Instead, he implored those with questions about the role of DLALC or the legal definition of Aboriginality to speak directly with him or other elders.

“If you really want to understand and support Aboriginal social, cultural and economic progress, engage with the legitimate community and the DLALC for an intelligent and respectful discussion.”



DLALC MEMBERS MARK EMBASSY ANNIVERSARY

A delegation of DLALC members headed to Canberra recently to help mark the 50th anniversary of The Tent Embassy.

The Tent Embassy is a symbol of Aboriginal protest against successive governments and their approach to Indigenous issues.

The most prominent issue being publicised by the embassy is Aboriginal sovereignty over the Australian continent and an acknowledgement of an Indigenous right to self-determination.

On 26 January 1972, four Aboriginal men from Redfern in Sydney established the Aboriginal Embassy under a beach umbrella on the lawn opposite what is now Old Parliament House in Canberra in response to the Australian government’s approach to Aboriginal land rights.

It followed the McMahon government’s implementation of a new system that rejected granting independent ownership of traditional land to Indigenous people in favour of 50-year general purpose leases for Indigenous communities, provided they could demonstrate a social and

economic use for the land and excluding any mineral and forest rights.’

The Aboriginal Tent Embassy, as it became known, inspired many more protesters to assemble in Canberra, including university students and high profile First Nations activists.

The protest attracted national and even international media attention.

In June of 1972, new laws made the encampment illegal and on Thursday 20 July, hundreds of protesters clashed with police. Many protesters were arrested and the tents were removed, only to be resurrected days later.

The Embassy stood until 1976 when it was dismantled following the introduction of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act of 1976 which was instigated by the Whitlam Government in mid-1975 and passed with bipartisan support by the Fraser government in December 1976.

The protest site moved around to various places in Canberra before returning to the original and current site in 1992.

The Embassy, now a permanent building, has suffered condemnation and even arson attacks over the years but to this day remains a symbol of Aboriginal protest.





NAIDOC WEEK

It may have only been a few months since the delayed 2021 NAIDOC Week celebrations took place but already excitement is building over its 2022 instalment, taking place July 3 – 10.

An event of national significance for all Australians, NAIDOC Week celebrations are held across Australia to celebrate the histories, cultures and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In marking one of the most significant dates on our annual events calendar, DLALC will kick off the week with an Elders on Country Day on Wednesday 6 July at Warre Warren, followed by the Darkinjung Family Fun Day on Thursday July 7th at the Tuggerah Regional Sporting Complex.

Our much anticipated NAIDOC Week Golf Day will take place on Friday July 8 at The Golf Day on Friday 8 July at Kooindah Waters Golf Club and conclude with our popular NAIDOC Week Ball at Mingara Recreation Club on Saturday July 9.

NAIDOC 2022’s central theme aims to commemorate the fact that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have a proud history of getting up, standing up, and showing up.

From the frontier wars and our earliest resistance fighters to fighting for change today – we must all continue to Get Up! Stand Up!

Show Up! for systemic change and keep rallying around our mob, our Elders and our communities.

DLALC chief executive Brendan Moyle says whether it’s seeking proper environmental, cultural and heritage protections, Constitutional change, a comprehensive process of truth-telling, working towards treaties, or calling out racism—we have proved that we are stronger when we band together.

Getting Up, Standing Up, and Showing Up can take many forms, he says, and it’s time to celebrate the many who have driven and led change in our communities over generations—they have been the heroes and champions of change, of equal rights and even basic human rights.

“We need to move beyond just acknowledgement, good intentions, empty words and promises, and hollow commitments. Enough is enough.”

The relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and nonIndigenous Australians needs to be based on justice, equity, and the proper recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ rights.

i Contact the DLALC office to register your interest or to find out further details on any of our NAIDOC Week activities.

MEET THE COMMUNITY

Can we start with a little about you?

My name is Tina West, I am the Manager of Barnardos Aboriginal Cultural Unit that support our agency across NSW and ACT.

What is your Country and what has been your involvement with DLALC?

I am a proud Wiradjuri women born and raised on Nanima mission in Wellington NSW, I have lived on beautiful Darkinjung country for the past 18 years. I have been a long-standing member of Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Lands Council and first became a board member in 2014. Over the past nine years I have consistently held a position on the board ranging from deputy chairperson to chairperson.

How long have you been in your current role and what area do you specialise in?

I have worked with Barnardos Australian for nine years and have specialised in child protection and out-of-home care. I held the role of manager of the newly-formed Aboriginal Cultural Unit for the past 12 months.

What do you enjoy most about your current role?

I love building cultural understanding for all staff I work with so that all our kids, families involved

“Being a part of the Darkinjung community is very important, as a single mum of three this community has supported me and my children...”



in the child protection system maintain their cultural and family connection and remain connected to their cultural community

What does being a part of the Darkinjung community mean to you?

Being a part of the Darkinjung community is very important, as a single mum of three this community has supported me and my children, they have been the extended family that my children needed. My children learnt early that our mob always had an eye on them. This community have provided my sons with great male role models, and have supported my children to grow into proud adults who are respectful and connected.

MEET THE TEAM

Can we start with a little about you?

My name is Bradley Shields and I am a proud Dunghutti Man. I am 22 years old and my current role at DLALC Is Administration Officer / Receptionist.

What is your Country and what has been your involvement with DLALC?

I was born and raised on Biripi Country in a town called Wauchope. I've been involved with DLALC for many years through my family and by attending community events hosted by Darkinjung.



What I enjoy the most about my role is the social aspect of getting to better know the community as well as the fact that I get to help with any needs/enquiries on a daily basis

How long have you been in your current role and what area do you specialise in?

I'm coming up to my three month mark now in my position with Darkinjung. The area I specialise in is clerical and organisational tasks like file organising, scheduling meetings, assisting other staff members & handling correspondence/messages on behalf of DLALC.

What do you enjoy most about your work?

What I enjoy the most about my role is the social aspect of getting to better know the community as well as the fact that I get to help with any needs/enquiries on a daily basis. To me, being part of the Darkinjung community means collaborating and getting involved with community and helping support each other through any hardship.

How do you hope to be of service to DLALC members?

I enjoy being of service by providing a warm welcoming experience to the community and members to ensure everyone feels welcome and valued by Darkinjung.

THAT'S ALL FOR THE MEANTIME

Ngarralingayil Barker and Darkinjung Barker, located at Wollombi on the site of the former Wollombi Public School, play an integral part in providing a great education for our future leaders. Currently the two campuses are looking to fill vacancies for bus drivers.

If you feel this is a role that could suit you, please contact Matt Healey to express your interest. Matt can be reached on matt.healey@ccol.org.au or 0412 146 425.

Your executive would also like to take this opportunity to wish all members a happy, healthy and safe Easter break.

We hope everyone has a very enjoyable weekend and can spend time with their loved ones.

The DLALC office will be closed from 4:30pm Thursday April 14th up to and including Monday April 18th. It will re-open its doors at 9am Tuesday April 19th.