

Newsletter Edition 45 | January-March 2023









At CLCAC we take our responsibility to community safety in light of the COVID pandemic seriously and operate in compliance with Public Health Directions and all restrictions on businesses, activities and undertakings.

Our staff adhere to personal distancing and other requirements as much as is practically possible.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewers are advised this publication may contain images of people who have passed on.

CLCAC is a not for profit Aboriginal Corporation incorporated under the CATSI Act 2006 (Cth) and primarily funded by State and Commonwealth departments and agencies.

We wish to acknowledge and thank the following organisations for their continued support:



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Directory

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) - Rachel Amini-Yanner

Deputy CEO/Corporate Services Manager – Trish Steineck

Principal Legal Officer (PLO) - Ryan Ellis

Capacity & Economic Development Manager – Scott McAlister

Chairperson – Thomas Wilson (Lardil)

Director - Marlene Logan (Gkuthaarn)

Director - Delma Loogatha (Kaiadilt)

Director - Donald Bob (Garawa)

Director – Joseph Rainbow (Kurtijar)

Director - Hayden Tyrell (Kukatj)

Director – Murrandoo Yanner Jnr (Gangalidda)

Director - Henry Aplin (Waanyi)

Director - Lawrence Burke (Yangkaal)

Contact Person - Apryl Ford



CEO's Update

To say the first quarter of 2023 has been a very intense time for all of us in the Lower Gulf of Carpentaria is a rather large understatement.

We had such big wet season and then were inundated with water flow from four major river systems and catchments causing the flood disaster I had not witnessed before in 30 years in Moungibi (Burketown) or Biddungu (Gregory). Our Gangalidda & Garawa Rangers were simply amazing in the efforts they put in when the floodwaters were rising, holding the fort during the evacuations and then with the disaster recovery mission.

I must mention that the Ngumari Waanyi Rangers at Biddungu should also be commended for assisting in the evacuation of their community and keeping us informed daily through whatever communication means that was available to them at the time. With further deployment assistance from our Rangers in Normanton and Biddungu (through their capacity as RFS (QFES) members) during the recovery phase, this boosted our numbers to get the job done in Moungibi and surrounding areas in a timely and efficient manner.

There is still a lot of work to be done, and one of our priority task will be looking at undertaking an environmental assessment of the country, biodiversity impacts including erosion damages and mapping of changes to the waterways and landscape. We are

currently seeking funding to carry out the aerial survey before planning the relevant projects on ground. We are also drafting a submission to be lodged next month to the Australia's Natural Disaster Resilience inquiry senate select committee on Disaster Recovery and Resilience.

And despite all this devastation there is reason for optimism. We are excited to see the launch of the Yagurli Tours branded hot air balloon! Read the full story on page 13 but doesn't it look magnificent over the water in Canberra? We are looking forward to seeing it rising over the horizons at Moungibi bringing a much-needed injection of tourism activity to our region and a wonderful symbol of hope on the horizon.

While the flooding event has dominated the region- there have been new developments in our Cairns office where we welcome our new Capacity and Economic Development Manager, Scott McAlister. We are looking forward to see where his collaborative approach will assist the PBC unit team to further support the growth of our PBC's economic opportunities and resources in the region. We also welcome other new Cairns staff members Eli Blackadder and Sally Chalmers, as well as Shakane Edwards on the Ranger Normanton team.

Until our next edition, please stay safe.





An Unprecedented Event

The Catastrophic Flooding of the Gulf

On an unprecedented scale in recorded history, the recent flooding event in the Gulf region has been catastrophic, the history-shaping impact of which is likely to be felt for a long to come.

After a wet season of near-constant rain, Normanton and Gregory had been flooded in since December 2022, with many community members stuck in Mt Isa and other areas, separated from families and community for many months.

But when the rain increased substantially, by March 9 the Gregory River at Riversleigh near Lawn Hill reached 18m, surpassing the 1971 flood record of 10.8m. At Doomadgee, the Nicholson River reached a record of 7.85m. By the second week of the month, the water level had already surpassed its previous 2011 flood record of 6.78 metres. Moungibi (Burketown) received 293mm of rain across one Friday and Saturday alone.

After the relentless deluge, the skies finally cleared across the Gulf, however, the north-flowing rivers were still swelling, carrying vast amounts of water from the catchments.

The nature of the gulf's river systems made it difficult to predict how severe flooding would be because the peak went quickly beyond any previous modelling.

The small town of Bidunggu was entirely underwater and likewise, almost every street in Moungibi was flooded. Neighbouring farming properties were also quickly going underwater with many cattle and animals swimming through flood waters despeartely seeking higher ground.

After the majority of the town was evacuated around 70 residents chose to stay behind to look after animals and the township. This included the majority of our Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers who worked hard to deal with crocodiles cruising through floodwaters and other realities of a region reeling with the impacts of such incredible inundation.





An Unprecedented Recovery

The Resilience and Cooperation of Our Communities

When the floodwaters began to recede, the extent of the devastation began to become apparent, including extensive infrastructure damage, shocking stock and property losses, and in some cases, homes that have been part of families for generations becoming unsalvageable.

The recovery effort, however, has shown the resilience and cooperation that permeates communities living in often uncompromising climates.

Our Ranger teams took part in many weeks of hard work helping clean up community members' houses, yards and properties throughout the shire.

It has been a time of shared emotion between the Rangers and particular community members after seeing the extensive damage that had been caused to family members' homes and properties, unfortunately also included the loss of beloved pets and wildlife.

In conjunction with QFES, the Normanton Ranger team worked on rotation to assist with the clean up, with half of the crew joining the Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers in the recovery effort.

Heralded as heroes, our teams certainly stepped up-relocating venomous snakes, cleaning out filthy mud from homes and community buildings and washing down the streets to make Moungibi (Burketown) habitable again.

"The town was pretty smelly as all the sewerage was mixed in with the flood water," said Gangalidda and Garawa Ranger, Mick Watson.

With all of this hard work and dedication, the Rangers were heartened when some families and tenants were finally able to move back into their homes and begin the process of rebuilding.

"The great thing to see is people really coming together to support each other." said Murandoo Yanner Jnr, Head Ranger of the Gangalidda and Garawa team.









Native Title Update

It is often difficult to report on CLCAC activity in the Native Title space as much of it takes place behind the scenes. This doesn't however mean that nothing is happening!

At the moment we're conducting research towards new claims, having meetings with groups to discuss and progress matters, and there are multiple ILUA negotiations in progress.

RULEBOOK CHANGES

This quarter saw the 25 March deadline pass for all PBCs to update their rulebook to reflect changes required under the Native Title Legislation Act 2020.

The rules requiring revision were largely concerning membership and disputes. Specifically, the membership considerations covered: who can be a member, application for membership and reasons and process for cancelling memberships; and the dispute rules needed to outline resolution process for a dispute between the RNTBC and a common law holder.

As the Kurtijar Peoples PBC, MAC, came into existence after these changes it was only the remaining four PBCs in our region that were required to take these steps.

CLCAC successfully obtained a funding grant and assisted each of these PBCs to affect the rulebook changes by the deadline.

The GGNTAC and WNTAC rule books were changed following meetings at the AGM last year. After members approved the required changes, they were accepted this quarter.

GKAC members likewise resolved to amend their rulebook at a Special General Meeting held in late February.

ORIC granted an extension to GRAC to finalise the changes for consideration by its members at a special meeting scheduled for May.



PBC Capacity and Economic Development

Introducing CLCAC's New Capacity and Economic Development Manager

Scott McAlister recently joined CLCAC as the Capacity and Economic Development Manager. With support from a team of Project Officers, his role is to drive the development of strategies that will have a positive impact on regional economic growth in the Lower Gulf of Carpentaria and increase the capacity of Traditional Owner Groups, through their PBCs, (Prescribed Bodies Corporate) to respond to current and emerging business opportunities that will provide real employment outcomes and build a strong regional economy.

Scott is excited to be working collaboratively for the benefit of the Traditional Owner communities in the Lower Gulf, utilising all the skills, knowledge and networks acquired from many years living in the Torres Strait and working in that region, as well as his work in the Lower Gulf and Cape York regions.

In his time at Community Owned Enterprises, of the many projects Scott was involved in the standouts were:

- The construction work on the St Pauls Hall on Moa Island. He and the team were able to use CDEP workers and it was a 100% local Moa Island workforce!
- The other is a footpath construction project in Doomadgee.
 In partnership with Doomadgee Shire Council, community development provider, Ngooderi and local building

contractor, Gulf Building Services, his team employed 100% local, creating paid traineeships for 12 people. This facilitated 100 points of ID, Certificate 1 in construction, White Card, and tickets for excavator, front end loader and skid steer and means that these participants are now ready to step up to any future construction projects in their area.

Scott is passionate about helping create more sustainable, community-based opportunities so there's no need to fly other people in. He believes locally delivered projects create a different connection and pride in the development, becoming part of the local economy and part of the community's story. "Having ownership is crucial!" he enthused. "People know what their communities need. I don't have all the solutions, but I have two ears and a dedication to listening."

Welcome to the team Scott!



What's all the din about DINS?

The Quest for Director IDs

After recent changes in the Corporations Act 2001, all company directors need to verify their identity as part of a new director identification number (DIN) requirement.

This is essentially to mitigate fraudulent activity by those in positions of governance and increase director accountability.

DINs will enable regulators, administrators and liquidators to more easily trace a director's corporate history, prevent the use of fictitious identities and mitigate adverse cross directorships (when two (or more) directors sit on the boards of the other).

They have in a large part been introduced as part of the broader effort to combat illegal "phoenix" activity, for example, where individuals transfer and operate a a loss-making business into new entities to avoid paying creditors.

There are an estimated 2.5 million directors in Australia, all of whom have needed to meet their legal obligations and apply before their specific deadlines which were depending on when they were appointed as a director.

This can prove more than a little problematic for residents of

remote communities.

100 points of identification might be easy to organise in capital cities but for residents of our communities, if they don't already have it, it can take considerable time to get all the required official identification documentation.

However, we are pleased to report that with support from CLCAC, all our region's PBC Directors were able to comply with the deadline, through obtaining a DIN, or in a few cases obtaining an official extension in time whilst awaiting official identification documentation.

CLCAC has been providing support to our region's PBC Directors to ensure they apply for a DIN, or where copies of supporting identification are awaited, that they apply for an official extension in time whilst awaiting official identification documentation.

PBC and CLCAC Members should consider applying for a DIN in advance of director elections if considering nominating as a Director. This can be done online at the Australian Business Registry Services (ABRS) website abrs.gov.au or by using a paper form available from ABRS.



The Future's on the Horizon

Yagurli Launches the World's First Indigenous-Owned Hot Air Balloon

At the Canberra Balloon Spectacular in mid-March, the Gangalidda and Garawa people launched so much more than the very first 100% Indigenous owned hot air balloon; they launched a new story for their people, propelled by the authentic self-determination that commercial success can bring.

Gangalidda & Garawa Services (GGS) has been working hard to further open the lower Gulf region to the benefits of a thriving and sustainable tourism industry. The organisation is motivated by the belief that coupled with the success of local Indigenous Ranger Programs, owning and operating local eco-tourism ventures provides the best opportunity for them as Traditional Owners to secure economic development that is shaped by sustainable environmental management.

GGS started Yagurli Tours (Yagurli means "fish") as a fishing charter operation in 2017. The driving motivation for the company was as much about homegrown economic opportunities and local employment, as it was about proudly sharing their culture and Country with the world.

Despite the tumult of the pandemic, the company has thrived, expanding to now offer several tours including Sunset Cruises, Fishing Charters and History & Cultural Tours.

In conjunction with Australia's premier hot air balloon operator Balloon Aloft, Yagurli Tours instigated a commercial trial in 2021 and 2022, which brought hot air balloons over the stunning vistas of Australia's largest aggregate of salt pans.

The success of the trial inspired the purchase of their own branded balloon with a blue envelope representing the big blue skies of the Gulf of Carpentaria, home of the Gangalidda and Garawa peoples and the fish is the logo for Yagurli Tours.

Mangubadijarri Yanner, Chairman of the Gangalidda & Garawa Native Title Aboriginal Corporation (GGNTAC RNTBC) said, "Our people have so much to offer in the eco-tourism space and we are excited to share this with as many people as possible – Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike. We hope that the continued successes of Yagurli Tours inspires other neighbouring tribes and language groups within the area to start up their own local tourism ventures."

The balloon will operate in Burketown during the tourism season of June to August and in various Balloon Aloft locations throughout the year.

With the recent flooding catastrophe, the initiative couldn't come at a better time to provide a much needed bright symbol of hope on the horizon.



Locked In But Not Down

The Normanton Team Keeping Busy

Being locked in in the rising floodwaters since December has not meant twiddling thumbs for our Normanton Ranger team!

With so many roads underwater and closed, the team have been unable to perform the activities that usually comprise their busy work plans in the first quarter of the year, such as weed and fire management and biodiversity surveys..

There's always much to do in an active Ranger base and the team have taken the opportunity to take care of the jobs that are normally shuffled down the priority list, but are no less important.

This included carrying out regular and special maintenance on machinery and equipment and also using the baler machine to process the marine debris collected during surveys amongst other jobs.

It was a good thing they spent the first part of this quarter completing all of this work, because the last part of the quarter was filled with the collaborative flood recovery effort the team has assisted with in the region.





Learning Culture on the Job

A New Role and a New Understanding

In late January, the Wellesley Islands Rangers welcomed aboard their newest recruit, Binban Jaffer-Williams. The 23-year-old Lardil man joins the team with full enthusiasm to be working on Country.

Binban lived most of his life in Tamworth and went to Sydney for boarding school for his high school studies.

He thinks the experience of growing up somewhere different gives him a fresh energy and outlook. "I've always liked the outdoors and been interested in horticulture."

His favourite part of the job is going out bush and he says he loves seeing the lay of the land, especially the parts that he only gets to access because he is a Ranger.

Learning more about his father's Country and Culture is a continuation from holidays spent on Mornington Island. "It's been great to build on the knowledge I got from coming up for holidays. I've been learning on the job, about certain trees and story places and our sacred stories".

Binban has also appreciated getting to know his family more. Every week his uncle goes fishing and he has enjoyed getting out with him.

"I love going out bush to hunt, fish, camp or anything that gets me out on my Country. I like learning anything that keeps me connected to my culture like making handcrafts or trying to learn language, learning the history of my people and how we protect the land with knowledge that's been handed down for generations."

He enjoys the tech side of the job and has found it easy to learn this part of the role, capturing and recording all the stats and other scientific data that the Rangers work with.

"It's just awesome being part of it all. There's so much more to do and it's an exciting time to be involved. Everything's growing and developing!"

Ranger Coordinator Tommy Wilson says, "It's always interesting to see what these young guys bring to the role, especially when they're keen and hungry to learn!"

Binban is committed to the role. "As a Ranger on my own Country, I feel more connected and want to make sure that our Country stays clean and healthy for us and future generations to come."



From the Region to Mon Repos

Training for Turtle Conservation

Mon Repos Turtle Centre in Bundaberg supports the largest concentration of nesting marine turtles on the eastern Australian mainland and is a globally significant site considered critical for the survival of the endangered loggerhead turtle.

Rangers from the Lower Gulf region attend regular training at the centre to expand their knowledge and experience in the pursuit of protecting turtle species.

In late December Rangers Nikita Aitkens and Jimmy Kum-Sing (Gangalidda and Garawa unit) and Wellesley Islands Rangers, Dane Toby and Cliff Yarrack journeyed to the centre and in January, Milmarja Yanner and Ben Kum-Sing (Gangalidda and Garawa unit) were joined by Damien Gabori and Trent Reid (Wellesley Islands Rangers) for the training.

Throughout their weeklong visit Rangers learn about all the different types of sea turtles, the major factors causing population decline, the safe relocation of eggs, tagging turtles and much more.

Milmarja Yanner of the Gangalidda and Garawa unit said of the

experience, "This type of training is very useful to our team as it adds to our knowledge and technical understanding for our annual three-week turtle camp at Gunnamulla later in the year."

He explained that the Rangers on his team acquire most of their turtle knowledge at the camp but the Mon Repos training went into more depth to understanding the correct way to handle the eggs, refining the techniques and explaining the full science behind these.

"It's really important to keep them pointing in the same direction if relocating them. There can also be big impacts from not handling them properly. If shaken or dropped there is a much higher chance of the embryo being deformed."

Some of the eggs collected at Mon Repos were put into incubators and taken to the Queensland Museum, scheduled to hatch at the World Science festival in Brisbane in early March. This provides a wonderful educational opportunity for young people to see hatchlings, something they might otherwise never have the chance to experience firsthand.









A New Place to Call Home

And a Step Closer to a Permanent Base for the Ngumari Waanyi Rangers!

For the first year of their operations, the Ngumari Waanyi Rangers have been working out of temporary base at Burketown Shire Council (BSC) works depot at Gregory.

It has been a long time in the making but the team have now secured the key for a repurposed donga. BSC are providing the lease, water and power as an in kind contribution to the young unit

The intention has been to set up this space as a temporary base for the unit's operations until a permanent Ranger base is finalised.

Waanyi Native Title Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC has purchased three blocks at Gregory and the Ranger base will be built there when all planning processes have been completed. This is a big undertaking with many facets from feasibility studies to site testing and preparation to build and completion, so it's great that the team have a medium term solution in the meantime.





Playing an Important Part in a National Campaign

National Feral Pig Action Plan

Up to 45 per cent of Australia's land mass is inhabited by feral pigs. These introduced pests cause serious damage to ecosystems, biodiversity, habitats and culturally important sites, and have significant impacts on Australia's agricultural industry. Managing feral pig populations is difficult, time-consuming and expensive, and is complicated by their proliferation through both private and public land.

The National Feral Pig Action Plan was developed in response to the need for a coordinated control program. Headed by CEO Richie Archer, the mission of the organisation is one of guiding and supporting all land managers to deliver effective, coordinated, sustained and humane best practice management of feral pigs with goals to deliver long term suppression or eradication where possible.

In early February, the National committee met for a field visit.

The meeting included representatives from ten different groups with a mixed virtual and in-person attendance. It was the first time they've been able to get together for two years with all the disruptions caused by the COVID pandemic.

The group shared their experiences and updates with presentations on subjects as varied as coordinated management strategies, area specific impacts, engaging land managers and various management programs.

CLCAC's Land and Environment Regional Coordinator, Mark Hogno was in attendance and has played a pivotal role in the committee.

He said, "It is great to be involved with both the National Implementation Committee and the National Indigenous Advisory Committee, to represent CLCAC and to work alongside such experienced and committed people from many sectors - all with a common goal. This is possibly the first real national scale approach on the issue of feral pigs."



Ranger Activity Update

What Our Ranger Units Have Been Up To This Quarter

GANGALIDDA AND GARAWA UNIT

Turtle training (Mon Repos)
Weed work Burketown
Castnet surveys
Flood mitigation and clean up

NORMANTON UNIT

Core training
Ranger L & E Meeting
Biosecurity Community Animal Health Survey
Equipment Maintenance
Assisted Burketown team in cleanup

WELLESLEY ISLANDS UNIT

Community Animal Health Report (Biosecurity)
Aquatic Structures Survey for Potential Marine Pests (Biosecurity)
Mon Repos – 2 Rangers Jan Trip
Weed Management

North Queensland Threatened Species Symposium (Cairns) Water Quality Monitoring Certificate III CAEM Training Aerial Ghost Net Survey (Biosecurity) Coxswain's Training Completed (Tommy and Cliff)

NGUMARI WAANYI UNIT

Boodjamulla Coopeartive Management Council Cemetrery Cleanup Gregory flooding event and ongoing cleanup

Staff Updates

Welcome to the CLCAC Team!



Elaine (Eli) Blackadder Name: Position Title: Administrative Officer

CLCAC start date: 05/12/22

What do you enjoy most about your role?

The fact that I get to talk to people, I love to talk and interact with people whether it's face to face or

over the phone. I enjoy helping people.

Hobby: None at present as I just moved from Darwin but I

was a keen dragonboater for about 15 years and

am hoping to take it up again

Favourite food: I love Greek food (because of my Greek heritage) Favourite music: 50 and 60's, 80's 90's music, some heavy metal

State of Origin GO NEW SOUTH WALES) or rugby league (GO ROOSTERS) Favourite sport:



Shakane Edwards Name

Position Title: Normanton Ranger

CLCAC start date: 09/03/23

What do you enjoy most about your role?

It's something new and different

Hobby: Fishing, footy Garlic Prawns Favourite food: Favourite music: Country

Favourite sport: Fishing, footy



Sally Chalmers Name:

Position Title: PBC Capacity & Economic Development Project

Officer

CLCAC start date: 27/3/23

What do you enjoy most about your role?

I love meeting new people, visiting new regions,

learning language and culture, and the preservation of land and wildlife

Hobby: Wildlife Rescue- mainly bird rescue & rehabilitation

Favourite food: Anything prepared & shared with family and friends

Favourite music: Relax to classical or jazz, jump around to heavy metal or rap; play piano, drums, harmonica & uke

Favourite sport: Formerly tennis but now dancing



What's on?

7 April	Good Friday	14 May	Mother's Day
8 April	The Day After Good Friday	26 May	National Sorry Day
9 April	Easter Sunday	27 May	1967 Referendum
10 April	Easter Monday	3 June	Mabo Day
21 April	Earth Day	5 June	World Environment Day
25 April	ANZAC Day	8 June	World Oceans Day
27 April	Incorporation of CLCAC (1984)		Normanton Public Holiday
28 April	World Day for Safety and Health at Work	9 June	Normanton Rodeo
1 May	Labour Day	10 June	Normanton Rodeo

Want to stay up to date with all the news from CLCAC and our Ranger teams? Find us on socials!

Instagram:

https://www.instagram.com/carpentarialandcouncil/

Facebook:

 ${\sf CLCAC-\underline{https://www.facebook.com/CLCAC}}$

Gangalidda and Garawa Rangers - https://www.facebook.com/ggrangers
Normanton Rangers - https://www.facebook.com/Normantonrangers

Wellesley Islands Rangers - https://www.facebook.com/Wellesley-Islands-Rangers-169423313641451

CLCAC Member's Contact Details Update and Electronic Nomination Form

It is important that CLCAC can contact our Members and Traditional Owners of the Southern Gulf of Carpentaria region to keep you informed of what is happening in and around your community, and notify you of important meetings.

If you have changed your postal address or contact numbers or would like to nominate an email address for receipt of notices please complete the attached form and post to:

CLCAC's Contact Person, Apryl Ford, PO Box 71, Burketown Qld 4830 or request a form by email: aford@clcac.com.au.



CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

Personal Details					
Name:					
Address: (residential)					
Address: (postal)					
Home Tel:	Mobile:				
Email:					
I prefer to receive notices via (please tick selection)					
□ Post					
– Email					
□ Email					
Signed:					



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