



Pemulwuy

Newsletter of the NSW AECG Inc.

January 2016

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STEM Camp Dubbo 2015



Have your say

Want to have your say?

Let everyone know the great things happening in your Local or Regional AECG. To be published, send your photos and stories to: info@aecg.nsw.edu.au



The NSW AECG Inc. would like to Acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work, and pay our respect to Elders past and present.



From the President...

Welcome back to 2016 which already is gearing up to be another busy year. 2015 was a challenging year managing our loss of funding whilst still trying to maintain a level of service and support to the organisation.

The Association Management Committee has decided on three strategic themes for the future direction of the organisation. They are Sustainability, Service Delivery and Advocacy and Partnerships. Our Professional Learning during 2015 was well attended and will continue to grow in 2016. New resources are planned for 2016 which will complement the ones already made available in 2015.

As always, the articles in this edition of the Pemulwuy only provide a snapshot of some of the great things happening around NSW. I sincerely thank all the contributors and the Local and Regional AECGs who have sent in news items to make this edition of the Pemulwuy jam packed full of interesting reading!!!

Our new website is just about to go live, as I write this message, so please visit and have a browse and as always we are happy to listen to feedback on how we can improve our flow of information. Don't forget our App and Facebook page which is also another great source of information.

Thinking about the year ahead and the workload associated with it is making me a little tired, so I might just take some time and enjoy reading this edition of the Pemulwuy, in a cool spot if I can find one at the moment.

Happy reading!!!!!!

Cindy Berwick
President
NSW AECG Inc.

The AIS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Conference 2015

The University of Technology was the host for this year's Association of Independent Schools (AIS) 2015 Conference. This 2 day conference started with a Welcome to Country performed by Aunty Ann Weldon of the Metropolitan Local Land Council. This was followed by a keynote address from Alex Shain of Reconciliation Australia.

Participants at the conference attended a number of different workshops throughout the 2 days including NSW AECG, NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service, Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority and a variety of hands on cultural activities.

Some schools presented on their own individual success stories. These included capacity building for teachers around Aboriginal education, Aboriginal perspectives across the curriculum and Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) for Aboriginal students.

For further information on the AIS, go to www.aisnsw.edu.au or ais@aisnsw.edu.au

NSW AECG 25th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Will take place on

Friday 18th March 2016

at

TAFE Western

Dubbo Myall Street Campus, Dubbo NSW 2830

Commencing 9:00am sharp

We promote respect, empowerment
and self-determination



Aboriginal Education at Young North Public School

Recently, Riverina 1 Aboriginal Education Consultative Group held its meeting at Young North Public School. The town of Young is situated on the South West Slopes of New South Wales and is renowned for glorious undulating countryside, vineyards, and orchards and for being known as the Cherry Capital of Australia.

The AECG meeting was attended by delegates from towns including Tumut, Leeton, Gundagai, Wagga Wagga and Lake Cargelligo. The local president Cheryl Fensom said it was always a delight to meet other Aboriginal community members who share the same passion for education of Aboriginal students. The meeting at Young North Public School was even more special for Cheryl as her grand daughter attends this school.



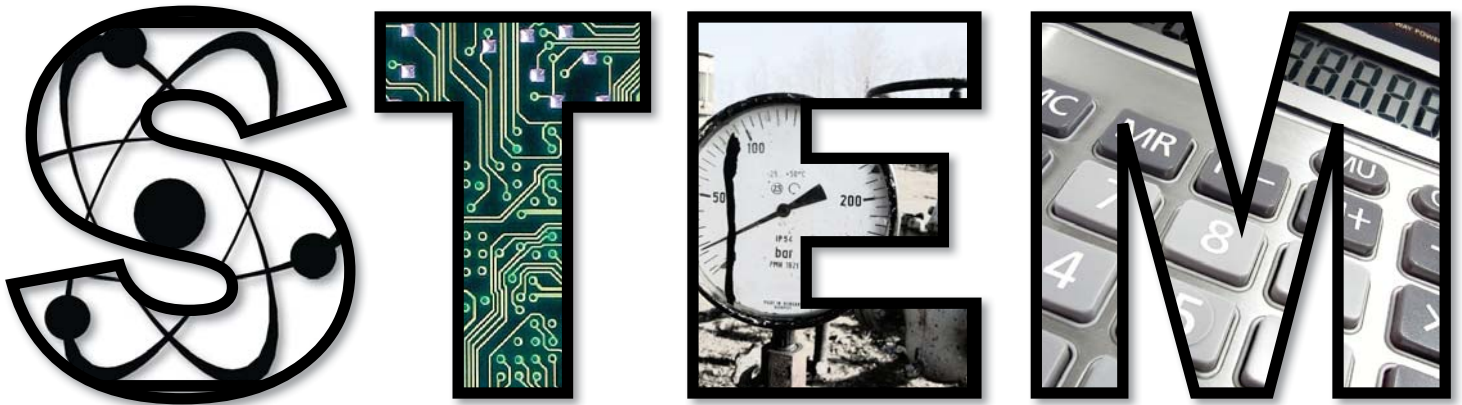
Young North Public School Principal Mr Kel Smerdon and Young Local AECG President Cheryl Fensom

The meeting highlighted the wonderful things and achievements that public schools across the region were doing in Aboriginal education for all students.

At the meeting the idea was discussed of having an Aboriginal program worker employed and acknowledged the work being done at Young High School to support Wiradjuri language across the local schools.

The principal of Young North Public School said it was an honor for his school to host the meeting and reflect on the educational outcomes being achieved by students in the local schools.





Science

Technology

Engineering

Mathematics

Camp



STEM Camp Looks to the Stars

Around 130 students from across rural and remote NSW attended the inaugural STEM (Science, Technology, engineering and Mathematics) gathering in Dubbo for a three-day camp that was held in late October, 2015.

The camp brought together students from

Boggabilla, Bourke, Brewarrina, Collarenebri, Coonamble, Inverell, Moree, Narromine, Taree, Toronto, Walgett and Wilcannia.

The camp is focussed on motivating students to take a closer look at the burgeoning opportunities that the STEM areas offer students and the nation. The STEM Youth Development Camp is a joint initiative between the Connected Communities initiative, the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc., (NSW AECG) and the newly-formed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mathematics Alliance (ATSIMA).

Connected Communities Executive Director Michele Hall said the camp demonstrates the diverse ways schools are seeking to foster generational change through better outcomes for students and giving students access to pathways for careers and further learning. "Through hands-on activities, engaging with industry and meeting and mixing with role models we want to inspire these students and give them the confidence to seek a STEM future," Ms Hall said.

The NSW AECG has been the driving force behind organising the logistics of the camp. AECG State President Ms Cindy Berwick stated that "We believe in giving kids every opportunity and our commitment is to advocate for and foster better educational outcomes and life opportunities for Aboriginal students. Supporting students to participate in workshops like this, which is based



around a culturally inclusive framework, gives them a strong sense of identity while engaging in the broader curriculum area."

Dr Chris Matthews, a lecturer at Griffith University School of Environment and Chair of the ATSIMA, said activities at the camp focussed on exploring STEM fields including:

- the mathematics of fire
- astronomy
- mathematics and community research
- robotics

"The camp also complements the AECG's vision to develop leadership skills and the newly-formed ATSIMA can act as a 'change agent' by encouraging students to believe they can be successful mathematicians."

Dr Chris Matthews has been instrumental in developing the STEM activities over the three days. He addressed students along with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mathematicians and an Aboriginal Civil Engineering professional, senior Connected Communities staff, representatives of AECG and local Aboriginal Elders.

A highlight of the camp was a visit to the famous CSIRO radio telescope observatory at Parkes which featured in the film 'The Dish.'







Aboriginal Studies Association



The 2015 ASA Conference held at The Big Dig in The Rocks, Sydney acknowledged the crucial role that Aboriginal Studies plays in the school curriculum. The one day conference held simultaneous sessions for students in one room and for teachers in another room.

During the morning session, a limited number of students walked up to the Human Rights Commission in the CBD to attend the Australian Human Rights Commission's Social Justice and Native Title 2015 report launch.

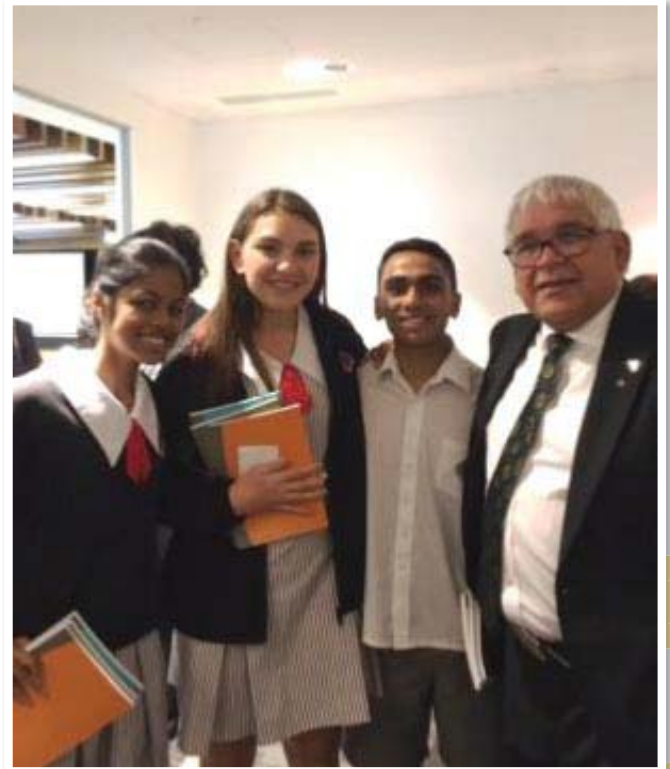
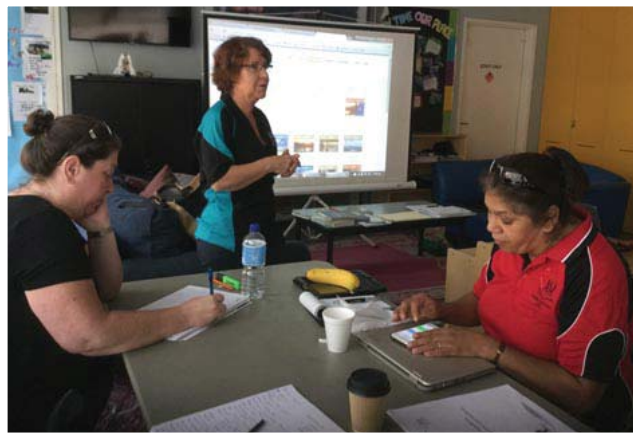
The report was launched by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Mr Mick Gooda, and introduced by the President of the Australian Human Rights Commission, Professor Gillian Triggs. Many people, prominent in the field of social justice and human rights, attended along with a small group of students and a media crew, which built an exciting and official atmosphere. They had the opportunity to meet Mr Gooda, whose enthusiasm was electrifying and relished the chance to talk with him and were very thankful for the support and attention he gave them. Mr Gooda has written the Social Justice and Native Title report for the last six years and each year the report focuses on a specific human rights and social justice issue. This year the report examined the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the child protection system and a focus on those with disabilities as we learnt that

the disability rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are nearly twice that of the rate for non-Indigenous Australians. The report also included major developments which occurred throughout the year including the Indigenous advancement strategy and issues concerning welfare, Constitutional recognition and remote communities. It was an amazing opportunity that they loved and for which they were very thankful.



Highlight of the conference was the Tribal Warrior cruise to Clarke Island in Sydney Harbour.

The Aboriginal Studies Association acknowledges the assistance and support from the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc. (AECG), the University of Sydney and the Department of Education's Aboriginal Education & Community Engagement Unit.



Students from Cherrybrook Technology High School with Mick Gooda at the Australian Human Rights Commission.





RMS Scholarships for Aboriginal HSC Students

The Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) are seeking applications from Aboriginal students who will complete Year 11 or Year 12 in 2016 and are interested in a career in Transport for NSW, Roads & Maritime Services or any agency within the Transport for NSW Cluster.

To be eligible for the Scholarship, the applicant must meet all of the following criteria:

- Completing the NSW Higher School Certificate (HSC).
- Undertaking one of the Mandatory Subjects:
 - Mathematics or Extension Mathematics (not General Mathematics); or
 - Advanced English (not Standard English).
- Obtain approval from their parent or guardian to apply and participate.
- Obtain and provide written support from their school Principal.
- Obtain and provide written support from the Local or Regional Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG).

For further information or to apply, please contact Kylie Stewart by phone: (02) 8849 2410, mobile: 0407 661 333 or email: kylie.stewart@rms.nsw.gov.au

All applications **MUST** be lodged by the closing date – **29 February 2016**



2nd State Meeting

Bermagui

The 2nd State Meeting was hosted by Gulaga Local AECG and Far South Coast Region and held at Bermagui Public School on the far south coast of NSW.

Aunty Shirley Forster opened the meeting with a Welcome to Country, acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land of the Yuin People. This was followed by the lighting of the remembrance candle. A performance by local students was a highlight and they were thanked by Regional President Aaron Parsons.

Throughout the day, Regional Presidents presented their reports with members of the Aboriginal Management Committee (AMC) chairing the proceedings.

In the evening of the first day, a community BBQ at Wallaga Lake Community Centre ensured everyone was able to yarn and gather in one spot. Local oysters, abalone and fish were on the menu. This was supplemented by men's culinary delights of lamb, baked vegetables, johnny cakes and damper.

The NSW AECG Inc AMC kindly thanks the Gulaga Local AECG and Far South Coast Regional AECG for their efforts and assistance over this 2 day meeting.



Dorroughby Environmental Education Centre launches new Aboriginal Studies Program:

“Garrima” (Bundjalung for respect)



Dorroughby Environmental Education Centre, (DEEC) near Lismore on the far north coast, has been developing the unit of work for the last two years with Bundjalung Elders, Glenn Rhodes (Department of Education Aboriginal Language and Cultural Nest Teacher Coordinator), Uncle Charles Moran and Digby Moran, Ashley Moran from the Office of Environment and Heritage, the Bundjalung Land Council and the Local AECG.

On Wednesday 28th October 2015, a special celebration was held with Widjabal Elders, local teachers and local Aboriginal students from The Ngulingah campus (Southern Cross Distance Education Unit) to celebrate the completion of a traditional Aboriginal Gunyah (shelter) and the release of the new Aboriginal Studies program. A welcome sign to the centre was completed by students in traditional Bundjalung language with the assistance of local Aboriginal artist Digby Moran. A Welcome to Country was given by Uncle Charles and special guests included Lismore mayor Jenny Dowell and Director of Public Schools Peter Campbell.

Dorroughby Environmental Education Centre's program “Garrima” educates students and teachers from local primary and high schools about Aboriginal culture and sustainability practices with culturally appropriate local resources run by Bundjalung guest artists and experts along with DEEC teachers.



The “Garrima” program emphasize the importance of the Widjabul/Wiyabul people who are part of the broader Bundjalung Nation as the traditional custodians of the land at and near our centre. The “Garrima” program will use approved methods and content to teach about the traditional lifestyles, connection to place, plants, tools and land uses and sustainability practices of the Widjabul/

Wiyabul people. A feature of the program will be the Gunyah built by the Ngulingah students. Dorroughby EEC is authorized to teach this program by the Local AECG and with permission from The Bundjalung Elders Council.

DEEC Principal Christine Freeman says "I am hoping our connection with land and the Wiyabul/ Wiyabul people who are part of the broader Bundjalung Nation will be strengthened by this program".

For further information on this program, contact Dorroughby Environmental Education Centre on Ph. 66895286



2016 Shoalhaven Graduation



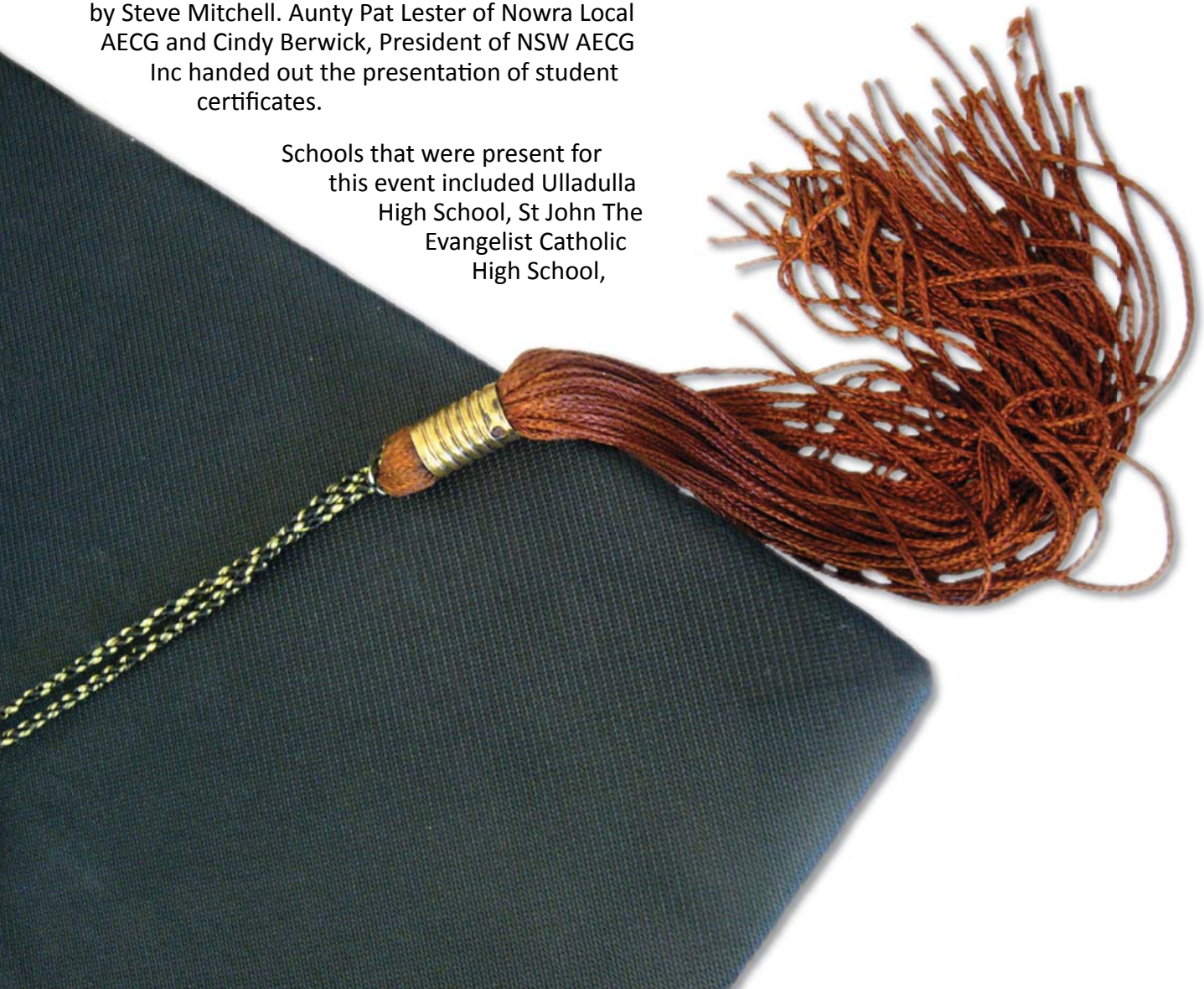
Year 12 Aboriginal students from schools across the Shoalhaven region held their graduation ceremony at the Bomaderry Bowling Club. The students looked the part in their formal dress attire for this important occasion in their education journey.

A Welcome to Country was performed by Uncle Tom Moore and Master of Ceremonies was done by Steve Mitchell. Aunty Pat Lester of Nowra Local AECG and Cindy Berwick, President of NSW AECG Inc handed out the presentation of student certificates.

Bomaderry High School, Nowra Anglican College, Shoalhaven High School, Vincentia High School and Kiama High School.

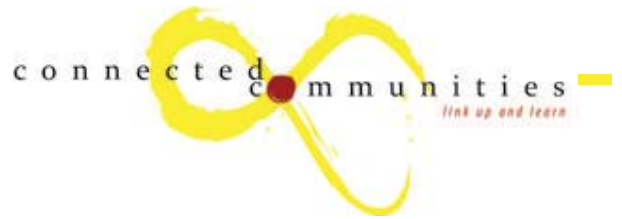
Congratulations to all students from these schools in their future endeavours after Year 12.

Schools that were present for this event included Ulladulla High School, St John The Evangelist Catholic High School,



Connected Communities

Coonamble High School Field Day



It has now been 3 years since the launch of the Connected Communities strategy. The benefits of this strategy are bearing fruition with poor attendance and below average academic outcomes becoming a thing of the past in some for many schools.

Innovation and flexibility has been the key to success. Engagement with community on education matters that are relevant and meaningful have also provided a new benchmark of cooperation.

At Coonamble High School, the 15 Connected Community schools came together to celebrate their achievements.



NATSIEC

2015 Melbourne



In November 2015, the NSW AECG and delegates from all over the state attended the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Conference over the 3 days we were able to showcase the programs that the NSW AECG are delivering through community and the Education system in NSW.

Our programs such as MGOALS,

Healthy Culture Healthy Country and our Junior AECG workshops were received exceptionally well and we have received numerous calls and feedback from the workshops we delivered.

Once again the NSW AECG are ahead of the Game!





Aboriginal Culture should be included in how we live today

Aboriginal culture is born of this land; it once was all around us from the dirt under our feet to the air we breathe, I believe it should be this way once more.

The dictionary defines culture as the sum of attitudes, customs, and beliefs that distinguishes one group of people from another. Culture is transmitted, through language, material objects, ritual, institutions and art, from one generation to the next.¹

Not only that, Aboriginal culture to me is identity and individuality. It's a way to live, and a part of who you are. Culture teaches you many things about the land you're living in. It teaches you respect, appreciation and gratitude. It teaches you how to treat everything and everyone around you, you learn to never take more than you need and live freely. Aboriginal culture not only gives you a purpose, but adds a deeper meaning in life.

The best way that Aboriginal culture can be included in how we live today is to have it taught in schools. Having culture as a subject in schools would be fun and engaging because there are many different things to do. It would bring the Aboriginal community into the school creating employment and breaking down the fear of institutions. It would also be a form of reconciliation and teach the new generations to value and respect our Aboriginal culture.

Aboriginal culture is fun and engaging. The many aspects of culture will give variety and will never get boring. Music and cultural games will give a much needed time to let out your energy, which will result in fewer problems in the classroom. To sing a song, play a game or learn a dance takes teamwork, something that is also needed in our community. The learning of Aboriginal cultural food will supply survival skills in the bush and promote healthy eating. For quieter times, sitting down and doing some artwork of listening to a Dreamtime Story is perfect.

Teaching language is a good way to involve our Indigenous Elders and bring the community together. We learn Japanese, French; we study other nations more than our own. We're too focused on the rest of the world that we ignore our beautiful culture and language. By bringing in Indigenous Elders and Community we create new job opportunities which, in turn helps to break the poverty cycle of many Indigenous people.

Making Aboriginal culture a subject at school is a form of reconciliation, a coming together. It will reconnect us with our ancestors' ways and teach us the value of culture. It will also help with kids who have problems with identity issues, for those who don't feel as if they fit in. For Indigenous children having everyone else accept Aboriginal culture will help them accept themselves. It will help heal past wrongs, the many times Aboriginal culture has been rejected and ignored. Having culture as a subject in schools would be a highlight in Australian History. It would be viewed as an important event alongside the 1965 freedom Ride, 1967 Referendum, 1972 Tent Embassy and 1971 raising of the Aboriginal Flag.²

So, Aboriginal culture should be a bigger part of the way we live, starting with making it a compulsory subject at school. The subject is fun and creative. It would create employment opportunities and would be a steady step forward in reconciliation. Aboriginal culture is the culture of Australia and the connection I feel with it has inspired me to make it a bigger part of the way we live.

Brodie McCristal, Yr 10 2015

Port Macquarie Learning Centre

References:

1 – dictionary.reference.com

2 – creativespirits.com

HAPPENINGS

acROSS THE SCHOOLS

Wallerawang Public School

The staff and students of Wallerawang Public School participated in a number of fun activities for NAIDOC Week that involved members of the Lithgow Aboriginal AECG.

President of Lithgow AECG, Owen Smith presented the school with an Emu Caller.

Special guest Mr Roger Holten delivered an informative and interactive artefacts show throughout the day and provided a great hands on approach for the students to learn.

Students learnt about 'Jonny Cakes' and 'Bush Bread'. Each class made their own damper and enjoyed their baking topped with delicious local honey.



(Source: Lithgow Mercury)

Portland Central School

This school was busy hosting a number of activities around the celebration of NAIDOC.

Special guests Jo Clancy and Becky Chatfield performed some traditional Aboriginal dances and involved the students in their routines. Their dances were linked to 'Country, People and Community'. The students appreciated the knowledge gained about Aboriginal culture through dance.

Local AECG President, Owen Smith presented the dancers with a set of clap sticks in appreciation.

Students were also given the opportunity to participate in making didgeridoos. They started the task with a hollowed out piece of Mallee tree which was stripped of its bark and then sanded. The small holes in the wood were then filled with bees wax to give the surface a smooth feel. The students then painted and burned symbols, drawings and representations of what they had learned about their Aboriginal culture. The didgeridoo is then finished with linseed oil and bees wax for the mouth piece.



(Source: Lithgow Mercury)



Marsden High School

Dylan Ralton, a Year 12 Aboriginal student at Marsden high School recently travelled to the USA as part of the global health company Johnson & Johnson's Bridge to Employment program. Along with fellow Marsden HS student Kirsten Mann, they were selected as Australia's first ever ambassadors for the program which consisted of students from all over the world being flown to the company's headquarters in Washington DC to learn about the industry and engage in an international youth forum.

The students were given time to explore the US capital before attending the company's headquarters for the remainder of the week to learn about the health industry.



Dylan sharing his recent US experience with school Aboriginal Education Officer, Kerry Smith

Cooerwull Public School

A Peace Rock has been unveiled in the Infants Native Garden at Cooerwull Public School. The celebration began where Elders Aunty Gloria and Uncle Ray were officially welcomed to the school.

The Peace Rock is a pictorial monument showing drawings representing mountains, rivers and plains. It was designed and made by Owen Smith by Lithgow AECG.

A painted diamond representing the Aboriginal Law of the Country (men, women, and children) and a goanna was also depicted.

A Smoking Ceremony was held at the school's primary campus with the official opening and re-naming of the Aboriginal area and yarning room. Aunty Gloria re-named the space as Mudgi Ngurang which means Mate's Place (home or nest).

A celebratory lunch followed.

(Source: Lithgow Mercury)



Unveiling of the peace rock



Teacher Professional Learning *on the* Georges River

The Georges River Catchment covers an area of 890 square km and contains a population over 1 million. One third of Sydney's population is located in this catchment.

Major tributaries of this catchment include – Bunburry Curran Creek, Cabramatta Creek, Prospect Creek, Harris and Williams Creek, Salt Pan Creek, Woronora Creek

An understanding of the Georges River Catchment provides an opportunity to consider the historical cultural diversity and diverse range of community expectations regarding catchment use and management. This catchment is part of the traditional lands of the Dharawal nation and Aboriginal peoples continue to have a living presence here.

Dr Shayne Williams and staff from the NSW AECG Secretariat provided a day of professional learning for teachers and consultants of the southern Sydney Catholic Office of Schools. This included a series of lectures and commentary on the Aboriginal history and sites of the area and a boat ride

up the Georges River from Sans Souci to Cattle Duffers Flat.

For more information on this type of professional learning, contact the NSW AECG at info@aecg.nsw.edu.au





Met North Regional AECG Achievement Awards 2015

Gawura Aboriginal Learning Centre at the Northern Beaches Campus Northern Institute TAFE NSW was filled with Aboriginal students from Kindergarten to Year 12, and their parents, carers and teachers on Saturday 7 November 2015 for a day of celebration of school and community achievements. Members of Ryde and Guringai local AECGs and other local Aboriginal community members, along with representatives from Department of Education and Department of Family and Community Services collaborated to ensure that the Met North Regional AECG Achievements Awards event put the efforts of our north-side kids first.



Met North Regional AECG members with Aboriginal students from public and private schools within the northern Sydney region outside Gawura Aboriginal Learning Centre, Northern Beaches Campus TAFE NSW where the Achievement Awards ceremony was held.

Photograph by Lea Harlow

The Met North Regional AECG Achievement Awards brought together students and teachers from across education systems with nominations this year open to Department of Education, Catholic Education and Independents schools in the Northern Sydney Region in a one-day event. Student award recipients loved their deadly AECG pencil cases and TAFE peak caps, and meeting up with students from other schools and with local community members.



Years 7-10 Achievement Award recipients representing various public and private schools within the northern Sydney region inside Gawura Aboriginal Learning Centre, Northern Beaches Campus TAFE NSW.

Photograph by Lea Harlow

Special thanks to Tim McCallum, Director, Public Schools, Dural Principal Network and Tracey Burraston, Aboriginal Community

Liaison Officer, Department of Education, for making the Achievement Awards a priority on the weekend. Simon Jovanovich, Dale Forbes and Jennifer Phillips, Family and Community Services, Northern Sydney District, were fantastic supporters on the day, presenting awards to deserving students, rolling their sleeves up for BBQ duties, providing administrative support and having a yarn with the mob. Behind the scenes, school principals, Di Bower and Bill Gillespie, also helped make the day a success. A shout out to Rob Cohen, Manager, Aboriginal Education and Training, Northern Sydney Institute, TAFE NSW, for helping to make the day the success it was.



Photograph by Lea Harlow

Croydon Park Public School

Community Garden



Inner City Local AECG President, Deb Daley and Met East Regional President, Sherri Longbottom attended Croydon Park Public School for their official opening of their entrance gardens on Thursday 18 November 2015. Federal MP Tony Burke, local Mayor John Faker and returned Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal servicemen from the local RSL were also in attendance.

Croydon Park Public School added an Aboriginal edible garden in the front entrance of the school and a 5 piece historical mural. The mural steps through the social/Military history of the area from pre 1880s through to the present day. Cultural misunderstanding was the theme at

the beginning of the mural, finishing with acceptance at the end. The school also made mention of Aboriginal people who served without recognition in WW1 In their ANZAC plaque.

An excellent and proud day for everyone.



Deadly Times at Orange High School



Orange High School has launched its own newspaper venturing into the world of journalism and reporting.

The aim of their newspaper is to report and share stories from the school and surrounding community and showcase the incredible work done by local Indigenous people in the Orange community and the students at Orange High School.

Principal David Lloyd said "the collation and development of the 'Deadly Times' is an incredibly exciting project as it provides Indigenous students with the platform to produce a high quality product in a meaningful project based learning environment."

The first edition launched during NAIDOC Week 2015 included articles on a coffee shop program for Aboriginal girls in Years 9 and 10, boys and the Brospeak program where

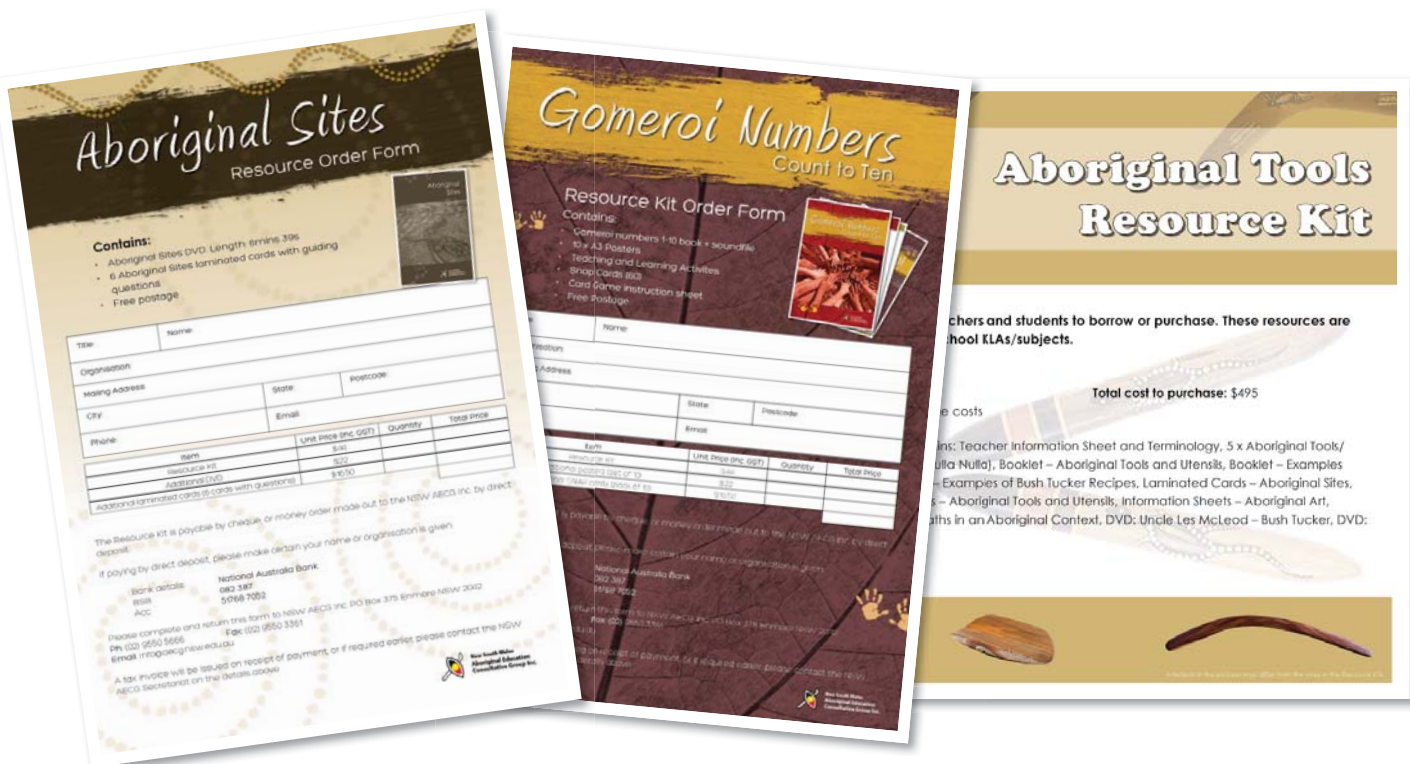
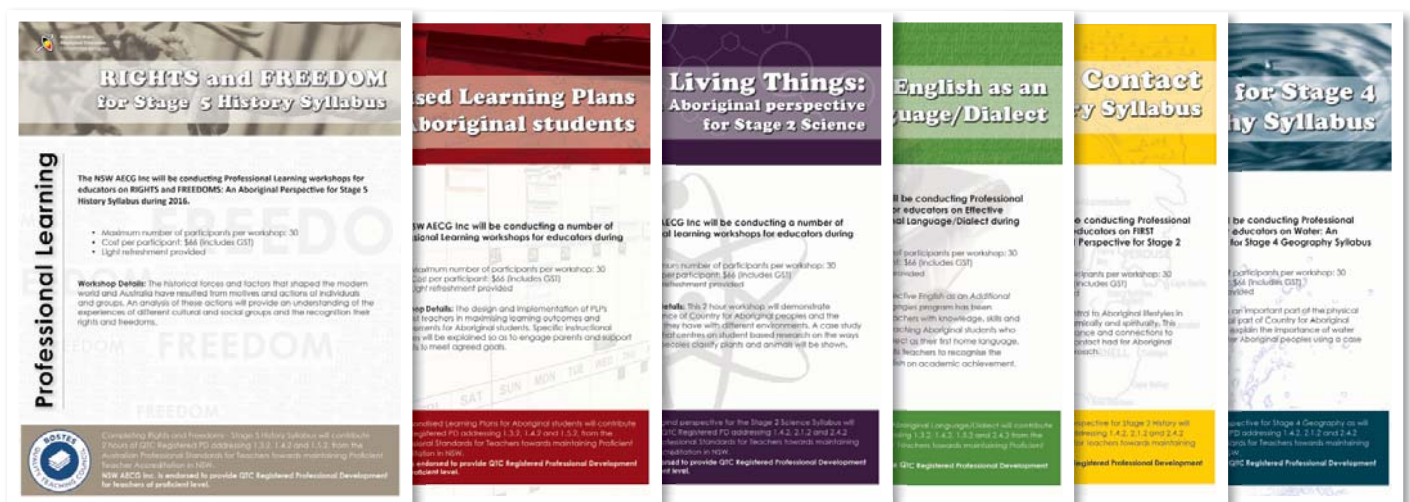
they visited Yaranigh's Grave and Borenore Caves, a Defence Force Careers Day which included a 45 minute flight in an old Hercules c130 aircraft over Bathurst and interviews with workers from the Orange Aboriginal Medical Service.

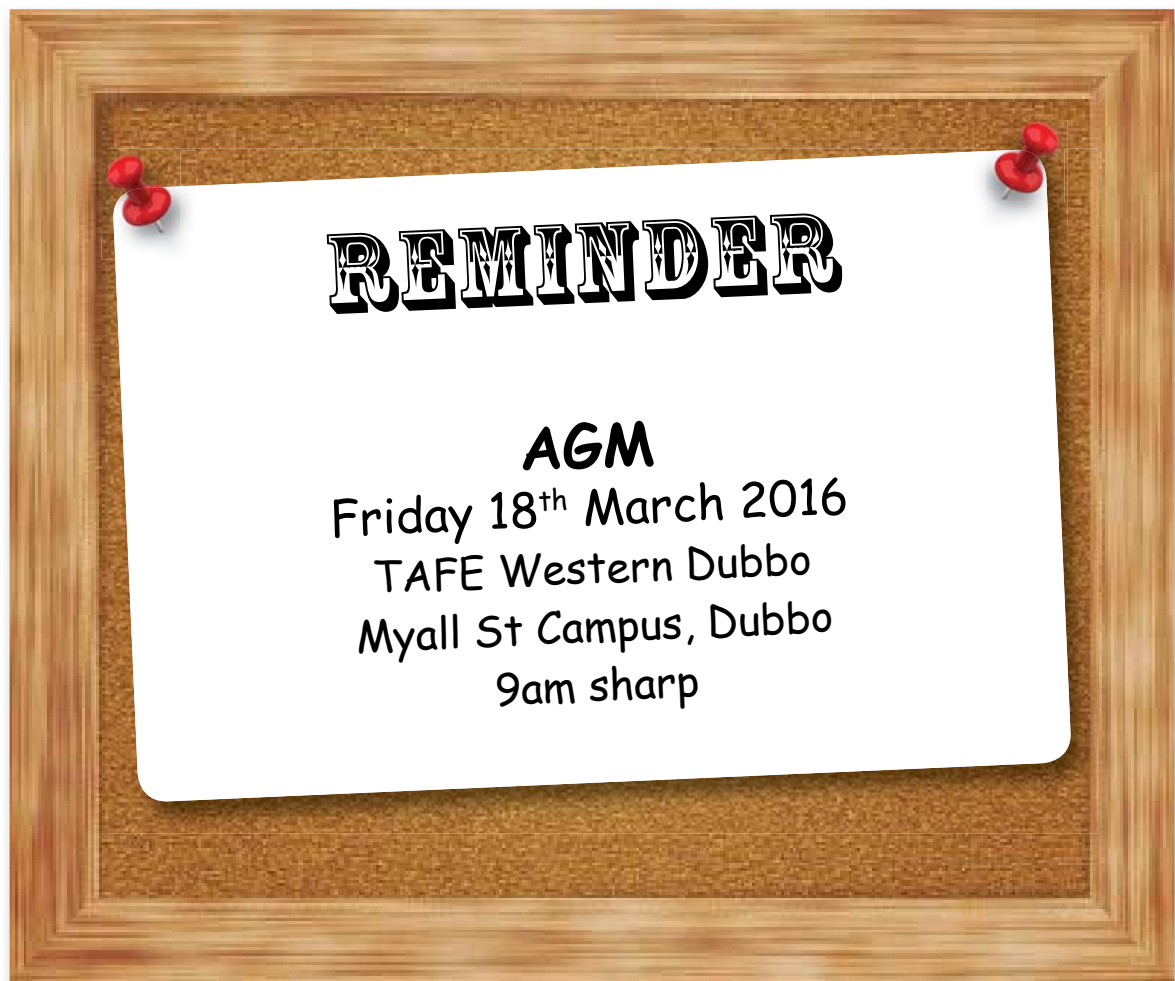


Bronson Bates and Kyle Morley showcasing Orange High School 'Deadly Times'

Resources & Professional Learning

This year the NSW AECG are again running Professional Learning workshops throughout the state. For further information or to register your interest, please contact our Curriculum Officer, Dave Lardner on (02) 9550 5666 or dave.lardner@aecg.nsw.edu.au. Resources will be available through our website or contact Wallula Munro on (02) 9550 5666 or wallula.munro@aecg.nsw.edu.au.





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AECG App



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