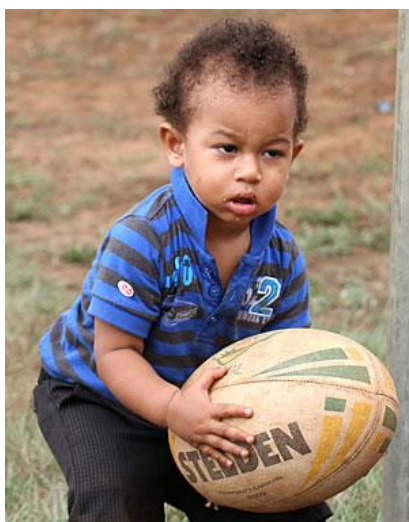


**In this Issue:** CEO's desk, Crocs, Deadly Ears, Santa, Mr Babia, Big Difference, Dan Ropeyarn Cup, and more...



Sharing a moment, Destiny (5 yrs) and Dexter (6 yrs).



Much more than a game, reunion at the **Dan Ropeyarn Cup**.



... more inside.



Alau Eagles took out the Grand Final. 8HB, second. Women's Final won by Red Dust Renegades, with Bau au Stingers taking out second. Contemporary Dance Comp: 1<sup>st</sup> Injinoo Dancers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mean Machine, Bamaga.



Togetherness.

**Late NEWS: Hand, foot and mouth disease, Page 6**

"All care is taken to ensure the accuracy of the information in this publication however NPARC, its officers, employees agents and consultants make no warranties or representations about the quality, accuracy, completeness, merchantability or fitness for purpose of any material in this publication. Subject to any law to the contrary which cannot be excluded, any liability howsoever arising (including in tort or for any incidental, special or consequential damages) is hereby excluded. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the NPARC and the inclusion of material in this publication does not represent an endorsement of that material by NPARC."



## From the CEO's Desk

The following report is tabled to provide the community with information on what the Council is up to, and to allay any rumours that are around with regards to future employment with Council. This report is submitted to you to provide transparency in Council's decision making process.

In moving into the 2010 / 2011 fiscal year, the NPARC is facing an enormous financial and resource challenge. Council has been very proactive in meeting its requirement under the *Local Government Act (2003)* and now, the *Local Government Act (2009)* whilst continuing to reconcile all of the issues Council inherited through the amalgamation processes.

At the time of drafting this News Letter Report, Council had just completed its second financial audit as an amalgamated Local Government. An analysis of the two sets of financial accounts identifies a significant reduction of cash (around \$4M) coming into the NPARC when compared to pre-amalgamation fiscal years. The reduction in funding is due to significant State (amalgamation restructure costs) and Commonwealth (CDEP reform) policy changes. The challenge for Council in dealing with these policy changes also comes at a time when the State Government Employment Code of Practice prohibited redundancies for three years, which ends in March 2011.

## Grant Management

Your Council is currently managing 192 grants that need quarterly reporting or final reconciliation of non-current "inherited grants". There are 98 current grants, that is, the Council grants officer has to produce 98 reports every 3 months or one report per day. This does not include half yearly reports, annual reports or the collation of performance data for the reports from council executives.

## CDEP and Future Employment

Prior to 1 July 2009 and at the time of the local government mergers, CDEP for the Bamaga and Seisia Communities was administered by the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA). The Bamaga and Seisia Island Councils were the providers of their respective CDEP systems.

CDEP for the Umagico, New Mapoon and Injinoo Communities was administered by the Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). The CDEP provider for these communities was Community Enterprises Australia (CEA). For the Injinoo Council, all payments were made to participants directly from CEA. For the Umagico and New Mapoon Councils, CDEP wages were paid by the Council and reimbursed by CEA.

The two CDEP systems operated under different guidelines. The TSRA guidelines provided a higher level of flexibility. The CDEP for Bamaga and Seisia Communities quickly evolved into a wages subsidy for new and existing Council positions. Under these arrangements, Council employees were registered as CDEP recipients even though they were generally in full time Council positions.

Pay for these employees were comprised of:

- CDEP wages for 35 hours each fortnight;
- a top up payment for the CDEP hours to take the hourly rate up to the correct rate for their position; and
- Council wages for 41 hours each fortnight.

In addition to the activities related to the amalgamation restructure, other tasks that have influenced the strategic direction of Council are:

- Meeting regulatory compliance under the new *Local Government Act (2009)*
- Enterprise divestment activities both future and past
- Commonwealth changes to CDEP
- Land tenure reform including the future transfer of the Deed Of Grant In Trust (D.O.G.I.T) land
- Housing reform including
  - The mandatory requirement for 40 year leases to be established for any new housing, and for housing upgrades with a value of \$50,000 or more, The state Government is also requesting council to hand-over all tenancy management activities; and
- Development of a robust and strategic planning framework to provide guidance to this; and future Councils to create a sustainable Local Government services in the NPA.



The Bamaga and Seisia Island Councils were provided with money to pay CDEP wages based on the number of CDEP participants at particular points in time. Where a CDEP participant did not attend for his or her required hours, he or she was not paid any CDEP wages and that money was used to pay the top up component for the Council positions and where possible pay for the Council hours (that is, the other 41 hours each fortnight). In other words, there was no requirement to return or acquit any unspent CDEP wages paid to the two Councils.

Under the TSRA guidelines, there were limited sanctions against participants who did not attend work, other than withholding their CDEP wages. Under these arrangements, the more CDEP participants who did not attend for their required hours, the more money the Councils had to spend on their own employees.

The outcomes of these arrangements were:

- substantial surpluses held by the Councils; and
- excessive overstaffing of Council positions.

From the Council merger date to 30 June 2009, the TSRA administered system continued and the NPARC was able to continue to use CDEP wages for the CDEP component of Council positions, as well as the top up component and additional Council only hours.

Under the DEEWR administered system, there were still a number of Council positions that were part funded by CDEP wages. However, the DEEWR guidelines prevented an individual from staying on CDEP for longer than 12 months. These guidelines were not always followed and there were a number of individuals who remained on CDEP while performing a full Council position for a number of years.

In the 2007 – 2008 financial years, the Bamaga and Seisia Councils received \$2.15m in funding for CDEP wages for the three quarters before the Council merger. Full year funding would have approximated \$2.87m. Accurate data is not available for the pre merger payments. However, based on experience in the first year of the merged Council operations, approximately \$1.2m of the CDEP wages would have been used to pay CDEP wages for CDEP participants not undertaking full time Council positions. This left a surplus of approximately \$1.67m to cover normal Council operating costs.

In addition to the wages costs, the Bamaga and Seisia Councils received the following payments:

- Operating costs - \$171K
- Capital purchase costs - \$173K
- CDEP Recurrent costs - \$825K
- Community Training Program costs - \$215K.

The total assistance provided for the 2009 – 10 year was \$1.5m, which then reduces to \$1.25m in 2010 – 2011. The above funding is not guaranteed to continue indefinitely. This additional funding is intended to fund the conversion of CDEP positions to fully funded Council positions. However, it does not cover the CDEP funding that was used to fund general Council operations. This has been mitigated to a small degree by CDEP income. However, this is currently inflated by the number of jobs secured from converting CDEP funded positions to full Council positions and is only available for a two year period. The difference in funding available to Council from CDEP also needs to be considered within the context of unfunded substantial and ongoing implementation costs associated with the Council merger. This is estimated at around a combined \$4M.

Of these additional payments, most of the operating costs and CDEP recurrent costs were able to be used for general Council purposes. This takes the funds available for general Council purposes to well over \$2m per year.

It is difficult to determine the number of Council positions that were subsidized by a wages subsidy in the Umagico, New Mapoon and Injinoo Councils. Taking a conservative estimate of 15 positions at each of the Councils, the value of the wages subsidy of those positions was around \$0.5m.

In summary, the CDEP arrangements in place pre merger provided a windfall to the Councils of in excess of \$2.5m per year. To put this into context, the SGFA and FAG grants for the five Councils at that time was equal to \$5.5m, which means that the CDEP arrangements added around 50 per cent to Council operating costs pre merger and in the first year post merger.

### **Post 1 July 2009**

From 1 July 2009, new CDEP arrangements administered by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (*FaHCSIA*) commenced. The new CDEP arrangements applied to all five communities. The Council was successful in its bid to be the CDEP provider.

The new guidelines for the CDEP included more stringent attendance requirements including removal of a CDEP participant from CDEP where that person failed to attend as required for two consecutive weeks.

CDEP wages paid to Council also became subject to an acquittal process to ensure unspent CDEP wages were not used for other purposes. The effect of this was an immediate reduction in the funds available to the Council to pay its existing workforce. To assist the Council in managing this transition, a range of grant funds were provided to the Council to convert CDEP top up employees to full Council positions (Job Conversion Program grants). The grant funding provided to the Council was as follows:

- DEWHA - \$136K (of which only \$68K could be used to replace previous CDEP funded positions)
- DOHA – Aged Care - \$331K
- DOHA, Sport and Rec - \$173K
- IEDG - \$160K
- Additional MUNS funding - \$141K
- Additional SGFA funding - \$123K
- One off grant from FaHCSIA - \$500K (*for the 2009 / 10 year*)

Despite this grant funding, there is still a substantial unfunded component that is being carried by the NPARC. Barriers to reducing that unfunded component are:

- the Queensland Government's Code of Practice that prohibits any redundancies until 16 March 2011; and
- a poor work ethic established over many years due to chronic overstaffing of many areas of Council.

During the period leading to the end of the employment guarantee, the Council has no choice but to retain unfunded and unproductive staff at its own expense. Using a broad figure, the difference between the grant funding provided to support transition away from reliance on CDEP funds and the additional expenditure being covered by the Council is in excess of \$1m each financial year.

### ***The transition process***

The Council has developed an affordable employment structure to aim towards. A recruitment freeze has been put in place to hasten movement towards this structure. The recruitment freeze requires senior managers to first determine whether there are any excess employees within Council who can fill a vacant position before any external recruitment action is undertaken. This strategy has limited value due the frequency with which vacant positions require specialist skills not available within Council.

At the date of merger, the employment and CDEP details for the Council were as follows:

- CDEP only (including individuals on host agreements with other employers) – 254 (excludes those paid solely by CEA;
- CDEP top up employees (that is, working in full time Council positions, but with a CDEP component) – 179;
- Council only positions with no CDEP payments – 158.

At the present time, the equivalent numbers are:

- CDEP only – 75 (only includes continuing CDEP participants as new participants are paid directly by Centrelink);
- CDEP top up employees – 47;
- Council only positions with no CDEP payments:
  - formerly supported by CDEP – 69
  - never supported by CDEP – 116.

Total employment by Council, excluding CDEP only individuals has reduced from approximately 337 at merger to 232. Whilst the reduction in employment numbers may seem impressive, the impact on the budget is less impressive, as many of the positions that have been shed were held by casual employees or individuals who frequently did not attend work and were not paid.

The following is a comparison between current employment numbers and the affordable employment structure.

<b>Current positions within the NPARC Establishment</b>	<b>265</b>
Number of vacant positions	33
Positions currently filled	232
<b>Positions within the affordable structure</b>	<b>194</b>
Number of vacant positions within the affordable structure	33
<b>Net reduction in employee numbers required to attain the affordable structure</b>	<b>32</b>

Vacant positions within the affordable structure are due to:

- normal and customary turnover of labour with recruitment action underway; and
- new positions created to enable the continued delivery of basic Council services under the affordable structure.

The above table shows that the Council is currently paying 32 more employees than funding allows. At an average cost of \$44,000 per employee, this represents \$1.4m in unfunded employee costs. (Note that funding assumes the continuation of Job Conversion Funding that is currently being provided to the Council which is not guaranteed).

The following steps will be taken to move towards the affordable structure:

- matching of excess employees with vacant positions, including identification of individuals who can be trained within a reasonable timeframe to undertake the required duties;
- offer of voluntary redundancy to selected excess employees after the expiry of the employment guarantee;
- progressive review and further matching as positions are vacated through the normal and customary turnover of labour;
- continuation of the existing recruitment freeze until such time as the affordable structure has been achieved.

The matching process will produce three possible outcomes:

- employees who are able to move to a vacant position with minimal training involved;
- employees who are able to move to a vacant position but will require a period of training; and
- vacant positions that are unable to be filled by employees occupying surplus positions.



As a consequence, the actual number of surplus employees on completion of the matching process and subsequent external recruitment processes will be in the range of 32 to 65 at a cost of \$1.4m to \$2.9m per year.

The Council is not funded for redundancy costs. An analysis of potential redundancy costs of employees in positions identified as excess has shown that the average redundancy cost will be \$6,600 per employee. If all employees occupying excess positions were made redundant, the total redundancy cost would be \$402,000. Where employees in surplus positions accept a redundancy, the cost burden to Council will be reduced as the cost of the redundancy will be recovered over an average of 8.5 weeks (the average weeks of redundancy payments for employees in surplus positions).

The priority issue affecting the NPARC is the lack of attendance at work and the mandatory application of Council's Certified Agreement & Code of Conduct will be applied, I urge all employees to value your jobs.

I acknowledge the valuable contribution and dedication of all NPARC staff who work with me to provide vital services to the people of the NPA and on behalf of Mayor Elu and the NPARC Councillors, please have an enjoyable and safe Christmas.

Stuart Duncan, Chief Executive Officer

What are you looking at?  
A cattle.  
Where?  
There!



There is no such thing as 'a cattle'. That's only half of it.

What does cattle look like?

It must have at least 2 heads, 2 tails, 2 bodies, 4 eyes and 8 legs. Do you see any?



Yes, mum, there are one and a half over there.

No, dear. Time for maths. What are 3 minus 2?

I know, it's half a cattle.

When I do a bad thing, will I get a discount for all the good things I did?  
Give me an example.

Keeping the grass down, tirelessly pulling shoots and cutting my lip.

Better let the judge be the judge of that. More importantly, keep your tail down for the next 2 metres.

### Young, strong and proud!



Mepla all balas make a bran new sing. Chillax wer' gazebo listening for the music.

Released during Yumpla Cultural Festival, the DVD features NPA students in local settings, performing their own rap song. It's about life in the NPA. The project is funded by Queensland Government, Department of Communities. The Young, strong and proud program's aims were to develop communications tools to deal with issues such as alcohol, tobacco and inhalant abuse. Brisbane Indigenous Media Association produced the DVD.

### Respect NPA!



The side of the road is a lot cleaner, thanks to council workers who collected every tiny snippet and bagged it for later collection. Shown are just some of the many bags of mostly cans and wrappers found along a short strip of road.



Wet season hang-out.

Image courtesy Mr Phil Beyers

NPARC Chief Executive Officer  
Mr Stuart Duncan

**Late News:** Patient Information regarding the current outbreak of **Hand, foot and mouth disease** in the NPA.**What is hand, foot and mouth disease?**

Hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD) is a common viral infection that affects children and causes a specific blistering rash to the hands, feet and mouth. It has a worldwide distribution and tends to occur in small epidemics.

**What is the cause of HFMD?**

It is caused by an enterovirus, a group of viruses that infect the intestine. Enteron is the Greek word for intestine. The responsible virus is usually coxsackie A16 virus but other viruses from the A group, group B Coxsackie virus or enterovirus 71 can be responsible.

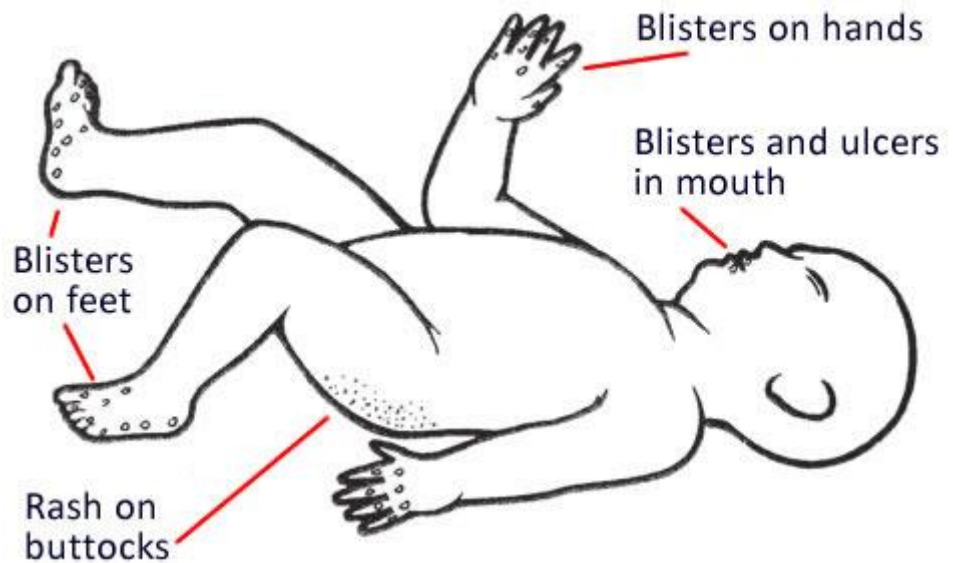
**How common is HFMD?**

It is common in children and often occurs among groups of children in child care centres, kindergartens and schools, earning it the names 'crèche disease' or 'child care centre disease'. The incidence is greatest in summer and autumn. It occurs sporadically in individuals but can occur in small epidemics. Although it usually occurs in children under 10 years of age, especially from six months to three years, it can also occur in adults, particularly younger adults.

**What are the symptoms?**

There is a prodromal illness that is present before the rash appears and includes:

- Malaise or feeling "out of sorts".
- Fever — usually of sudden onset.
- Sore throat.
- Poor appetite.
- Headache.
- Irritability — especially in small children.
- Abdominal pain — in some.
- The rash. Appears after one or two days:
  - small red spots appear and progress to blisters, which then become tender ulcers.
  - blisters (vesicles) in the gums of the mouth and around the mouth.
  - red lumps and blisters on the fingers and palms of the hand.
  - red lumps and blisters on the toes and soles of the feet.
  - may appear on the limbs, especially the buttocks, and also on the genitals.



Typical features of hand, foot and mouth disease

**Note:**

- The illness usually lasts for 7-10 days.
- The diagnosis is made on the clinical appearance — special tests are usually unnecessary.
- The ulcers in the mouth, which may affect the tongue, are painful.
- HFMD is NOT related to foot and mouth disease in animals.

**How is HFMD spread?**

It is transmitted by direct contact from person to person or by droplets spread in the air. The virus is excreted in the infected person's faeces and in saliva for several weeks. The incubation period is 3-6 days and children are infectious until the blisters have disappeared.

**What are the risks?**

Most children have a mild illness that is short lived and recover in 4-6 days. The skin blisters and ulcers heal without scarring. There is a risk to the foetus if a pregnant woman becomes infected, especially in late pregnancy.

**What about school or child care exclusion?**

Exclusion is not recommended; it is not practical because the virus may be present in the faeces for several weeks. However, formal exclusion recommendations may vary between states.

**What is the treatment?**

The infection is generally mild and can be treated symptomatically at home. Keep your child resting quietly until the fever and other symptoms disappear.

Fever and pain: Use paracetamol according to age — avoid alcohol-based preparations because they sting the mouth.

**Mouth ulcers:** rinse the mouth with salt water (a teaspoon of salt to one cup of water) after eating (if child can cope with rinsing).

Distress and irritability: if paracetamol is ineffective, consider a mild sedative such as a promethazine mixture.

**Diet:** Encourage increased fluid intake (drinking with a straw may help) and soft acceptable foods such as jelly, ice cream, milk, custard and cordials.

**Hygiene.** Note the following points:

- Parents and child care workers should wash their hands carefully after handling the child's faeces, secretions from the nose or mouth, or after contact with the skin.
- Ensure children do not share eating utensils or other objects that make oral contact with the patient, or use disposable items to avoid transmitting the infection.

Author: Professor John Murtagh

Copyright of Professor John Murtagh and Australian Doctor. Used with permission as patient information.



## Cairns accommodation for NPA cancer patients

In a Press Release, dated 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct, 2010, Cook MP, Mr Jason O'Brien welcomed the Bligh Governments decision to spend \$2.5 million on dedicated accommodation in Cairns for Cape York and Torres Strait cancer patients.

"The accommodation is part of the Bligh Labor Government's strategy to reduce the emotional, physical and financial burden on people who must travel to get medical treatment," says Mr O'Brien, "Patients will not be charged for the accommodation."

"The \$2.5 million grant was part of the Government's \$15 million election commitment for non-government organizations to build or enhance accommodation for patients travelling to receive treatment," says Queensland Premier Anna Bligh. The money is in form of a grant to Cancer Council Queensland, who will refurbish the Coolabah Motel on Mulgrave Road, and also provide recurrent annual funding of over \$400,000 to run the lodge and local support services, including counselling.

Cancer Council Queensland CEO, Professor Jeff Dunn, "Our plan is to deliver the new lodge by the time radiation therapy services commence in Cairns in mid-2011, working closely with the local community and the Queensland Government to ensure we deliver an accommodation facility that meets the needs of Far North Queenslanders and improves cancer survival. With the new Cairns lodge, Cancer Council Queensland will spend about \$1 million each year to run accommodation lodges state-wide for regional cancer patients."

The accommodation lodge will be ready for patients attending the new Liz Plummer Cancer Care Centre for treatment, which in itself also reduces the need for Cape York and Torres Strait cancer patients to travel to Townsville or Brisbane for treatment. The Liz Plummer Cancer Care Centre, which will include two new linear accelerators to treat cancer, is part of the State Government's \$446 million Cairns Hospital redevelopment. It will include the hospital's first radiation oncology unit, as well as other expanded cancer care services including day chemotherapy and specialist outpatient cancer care clinics. The \$446-million redevelopment will also include a 20- bed oncology ward, informs Mr O'Brien. Once refurbished, the lodge will have the capacity to accommodate up to 32 people at any one time, providing over 5800 patient bed nights per year and 5,800 potential bed nights for carers or family members.

## "We are committed to getting this right."

### Queenslanders encouraged having their say

"Queensland Government was committed to more localised hospital management with more involvement from clinicians and the community, says Deputy Premier and Minister for Health, Mr Paul Lucas in a statement released 26<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2010, "That's why we will establish new Local Hospital Networks. These networks will be responsible for the day to day operation of public hospitals."

The Government's aim is to establish these networks by 1st July, 2011. "Right now, we want to hear Queenslanders' views on the number, location and boundaries for these new networks. The networks will need to be large enough to operate efficiently and provide a reasonable range of hospital service, yet still be small enough to be effectively managed," explains the Minister.

"We are committed to getting this right," says Mr Lucas. "That's why my department has conducted face to face and video conference consultations with almost 1,000 people, across 10 health service districts, during 36 sessions. Consultations have already taken place across several sites, including Thursday Island, Saibai, and Cape York.

"We have heard from staff across every category, as well as GPs, community organisations, Health Community Councils, patient advocates, university clinical schools and peak bodies. Consultations have also been scheduled with major health stakeholders," informs Mr Lucas.

"The new Networks will have a local CEO and a local governing council, and they will deliver a real say to Queenslanders on how their local health service is run."

Any Queenslanders who want their view heard can also visit: [www.health.qld.gov.au/health-reform](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/health-reform)

## \$51million to help frail aged and people with disability

Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs, Ms Anastacia Palaszczuk, and Federal Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, Mr Mark Butler announced \$51million funding for home and community care services to be allocated. The statement was released on 26<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2010.

Almost \$7million are earmarked for home modifications throughout the state. The joint Commonwealth-State program will assist 230 organizations. The Federal Government provided \$33million, while the Queensland Government funded \$18million.

"Almost 5000 Queenslanders are set to benefit from these modifications. The bottom line is, this funding can mean the difference between living at home independently, or with loved ones, or having to live in a care home," says Ms Palaszczuk. "About 170,000 Queenslanders benefited from HACC services last year."

HACC is a joint Australian Government and Queensland Government initiative, delivering affordable and accessible care to help meet the needs of older people, people with a disability and their carers. "People want to remain independent, in their own homes and communities, close to friends and family for as long as they can," says Mr Butler. "This funding will help many people stay at home rather than move prematurely into residential care, providing the practical assistance that many older Australians need."

"The announcement also formed part of the Queensland Government's *Toward Q2* vision to support safe and caring communities," says Ms Palaszczuk.

Some of the prioritised programs are:

**\$10.9 million** to increase domestic assistance, personal care, social support, home maintenance, and respite care.

**\$6.87 million** total of home modifications.

**\$5.7 million** in major capital to expand or modify buildings and facilities.

**\$2.1 million** to 36 organisations will provide additional support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including domestic assistance, personal care, nursing and allied health, centre-based day activities.

**\$5.5 million** for clinical and specialist care including administering medication and wound dressings.

**\$3.3 million** for transport to assist people visit their GP, do their shopping and participate in their community.

Only those who listen  
can hear the voice of silence.



## Crocs at the doorstep

Mr Phil Byers lives at Atambaya Station, but works at Bamaga. At Atambaya one gets many visitors, frogs, snakes, roos and more.



The trap (above) is prepared.



Some of the pythons (left images) in the area. The one below is about 18 ft long with a chook (big lump at top in picture) and eggs in its belly. Another python swallowed a whole kangaroo, although the pictures are a bit graphic.

Mr Byers has a number of horses. Crocs hide in local waterholes and at Cockatoo Creek. One horse was bitten in the mouth, others in the belly and eye. They also visit the house at night, recorded on a movement triggered camera.



The first of three crocs is caught in the trap, to be relocated.

This is the smallest of three crocs caught.



Tail detail (right, lower) shows beautiful contrast and pattern. Croc not happy, trying the deaths roll.



All images above courtesy Mr Phil Beyers.



Before and after shots of the croc attack. Both injuries healed well.



Male bonding session in progress.



Mum, when school starts I want to do rhythmic, and learn to reed and ride.

Good idea, dear.



Mum, why can't everyone see things my way?

You got to get out of the way, dear, so that others can see from your viewpoint.

How much is much?  
How few are some?  
Are some few too?  
How many are enough?  
Can many be too few?  
Mum, are you listening?  
Can I outrun a pork?  
How loud do horses whisper?  
Can silence be noise?  
When will I run out of questions?  
Why doesn't the road grow  
when I give it lots of nutrients?  
Can you see me when I shut my eyes?  
Mum, I want to learn, help me!



I'm so glad I enrolled you in school. First term can't come soon enough.

**Correction:** Issue 19, Ta Moao should have been spelled: Ta Moko.

NPARC Chief Executive Officer  
Mr Stuart Duncan



## Deadly Ears



Dr Matthew Brown (left) is the Director of the Deadly Ears Program. "We're up here doing our twice yearly clinical surgery visit to the NPA. We conduct it at Bamaga Hospital, but we take kids from all over the NPA. Some of the kids we've seen this week come from the Torres Strait islands as well, because they happened to be in town, and we are more than happy to see them."

"The kids that we are seeing have come from a range of ear screenings that have been done by the local health workers here."

"The Deadly Ears Team is generally about a dozen people. We've got two ear, nose and throat doctors, two anaesthetists, a team of nurses and an audiologist. The work we deal with is ear problems, especially for kids that might need an obstruction removed, they might need their middle ears



ventilated with insertion of grommets, which are little tubes, they might need their eardrums repaired. We are based at the Royal Children's Hospital (Brisbane) with nurses and doctors from all over the place."

"Queensland Health has put about \$4.4million over three years into our program. That has recently been expanded to 2013. That works out \$1.4mill a year to run our area program. It's not just the clinical surgery either. Deadly Ears has a multi disciplinary team. We start with health promotion. Out at the foyer at Bamaga Hospital are posters that we've put up, to advertise what we do. We work with national rugby league players who come up and offer a great deal of interest and are very good in getting the message through, preventative messages to keep ears healthy."

"Unfortunately Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are much more susceptible to middle ear problems than non-indigenous Australians. It's across Australia you see this. It is extremely prevalent. They have the highest recorded rates of ear disease in the world, the highest recorded rates of middle ear disease in the world."



Deadly Ears corner gets decorated.



Mrs Adianna Williams having fun with 4 months old Andrew Thomas Salee, whilst Annie Salee (8yrs) is being

examined by Ms Chris Wallin, audiologist with the Deadly Ears' team.





“Deadly Ears offers a broad range of services, from raising awareness, that is health promotion, and I mentioned rugby league. We offer workforce development, in other words we train the health workers here to do the screening, to put the little torches with the magnifying glass into the kids ears and have a look, and it’s all very simple stuff, and it’s painless. The other part of our program is the allied health team, a couple of speech pathologists, and occupational therapist. What you see kids with middle ear problems, when it starts affect their hearing, they don’t get that auditory stimulation. They tend not to respond to sound, that is why we work very closely with the day-care centres, the mums and dads, with groups, the schools, to talk about hearing loss, and how teachers can interact with kids, have mums and dads interact with kids and play.”



One for every sound she hears.



Annie Salee listening for more.

Andrew Thomas Salee (below) thinks it is great fun just watching.



## Tavern facelift



Footpath construction at Bamaga Tavern.



Fence, plants and groundcover added.



Patron’s area with new concrete, retaining wall and fence.



The ground is prepared before the plants go in.



Weed control spraying at Bamaga.



Mosby Creek bridge rail received a coat of paint.



Election poster flat on its face, possibly caused by a nail malfunction. Where to from here?



## It's Santa Time

How did they get through the chimney, when there is none?



Soft things wanting to share cuddles, at Bamaga Post Office.



Just having a rest before the Cup starts

Where did he go?

Must have popped another rivet and keeled over.

27-Nov-2010

Yep, an upstanding, close-the-gap fence panel. Couldn't stretch all the way, so barb wired the rest.

Did he change his mind?

He must have remembered what he is.

02-Nov-2010

## Young Person Check

Ms Fiona Cannon, public health nurse from the Cairns Public Health Unit, Ms Yoko Nakata and others from Mens and Womens Health Program on T.I. are working with Ms Bev Jacobs and others (NPA FACS & QH staff) to do 'youths friendly' 'Young Person Check,' specifically aimed at 15 to 25 year olds. "It's a bit of a general check-up where we do height, weight, blood pressure, urine analysis, testing for proteins in the urine. We also check the blood glucose and fats in the blood, as well as test for sexually transmitted infections. It only takes 15 minutes, and is designed for young people," says Ms Cannon.

"Anyone from the age group who participates is offered an incentive, a \$20 voucher (telstra or store credit)."



Every participant, no matter what age, has a chance to win an I-pod Nano in a draw. "We are looking for common chronic disease risk factors for which there are interventions, and common infections that are important and easily treated. Most people don't know when they have an infection." 'Young Person Check' is funded by Queensland Health.

## NPA Breast Screening

"This is the new truck," explains Mr Ross Weston, of Breast Screening Cairns, Queensland Health, as he is in the process of setting it up, at Bamaga Hospital (early December).

The radiographers arrive per plane. The team comes up every two years examining for breast cancers.

The truck has wheelchair access. The team services many of Queensland's remote communities.



*I can't wait to get to school, mum.*

*I know, dear. What will you ask the teachers?*

*Why doesn't a pair of trousers have 4 legs?*

*If forever never starts, will never last an eternity?*

*Why do horseshoes don't have heels?*

*How high can a raindrop bounce?*



... and another nail malfunction.

*'Come with me, I give you everything. I chase away the boy.'*

*She duly kept her promise; at 12 he had it all.*



Peek a boo.

Images courtesy Mr Phil Beyers.

## Punsand Bay: Return of Country



A parcel of land at Cable Beach, Punsand Bay, has been returned under the control of the Apudthama Land Trust, in a ceremony held on site, Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2010. The area, shown in blue, excludes the Punsand Bay Resort. This land is Traditional Gudang country, to which the private lease has now expired. The deed was handed over in a ceremony held on site. (Top right shows Tip at Cape York).

NPARC Chief Executive Officer  
Mr Stuart Duncan



## All that I own

The spring claimed that it owned the creek,  
the creek claimed rivers, and the sea,  
the banks and shores amazed,  
'Without us, where they'd be?'

All raised their voice,  
each claimed their own,  
'cept one with many names...

'What do you own?' they questioned.

'All that I ever own is I,  
was born with all I had,  
and when I die each part of it  
I will be giving back.'

'All that you own you are?'

The rivers fell as banks gave way  
and ground beneath drained sea.

...when earth looked in its pockets  
found soil and seeds and streams,  
found bones and rocks and golden locks  
and as it always knew...

'Then take a look inside yourself,  
you, one with many names,  
is not all that you are of me,  
all that you own on loan?'

...then asked the falling drops of rain,  
'Where will you go?'  
'We're coming home.'

**Welcome to Mrs Margie Ware**, who is Program Manager of the Health Education Team, which is focused on Community Sexual Health and Chronic Illness reduction, NPA Family and Community Services, Bamaga. "The Health Education team is dedicated to improving the health of people by providing information on: the health challenges within the NPA, how the body works and how to make the right decisions to being and staying healthy. Knowing this information allows people to take some responsibility for keeping their own body healthy," explains Mrs Ware.



Being healthy means: **"You can get more out of life for longer."**

No fences, no borders, freedom to fly,  
sheer exhilaration...



**Oooooops**, that wasn't in my flight plan.  
Instead of flippedy-flap I should have gone flappedy-flip.



## New Mapoon Art Centre



Mrs Susan Kennedy shaping and decorating clay disks to form an intricate sphere.

NPARC is to receive \$20k, while Torres Strait Regional Authority is to receive \$50k from Indigenous Regional Arts Development Fund, 2010/11, announced Premier Anna Bligh (28 Oct 2010).



What is bitumen?



It's made of mountain, just flatter.



Oh, no... not again...

...that grass just doesn't give up.

## Protect umpla smol piknini

Dis wan por lete umpla ol parents know por teke umpla smol piknini go for health clinic por sekup. So e can protect umpla piknini prom kese sik and meke dempla strong and healthy.



## Specialists coming to NPA, T.I. and outer Islands December

Bamaga Hospital and Community PHCC

1 - 3 Dec Orthopaedic, Surgeon tba, T.I. H. OPD 1<sup>st</sup>, OT 2-3<sup>rd</sup>  
 2 - 3 Dec Dermatology Clinic, Dr Rob Miller, T.I. H 2<sup>nd</sup>, Yorke PHC 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 7- 8 Dec Renal Clinic, Dr Tim Furlong, Outer Islands  
 7 - 8 Dec, to be confirmed  
 8 Dec Chest Clinic, Thoracic Team, CBH, Saibai PHC 8th  
 9 Dec Chest Clinic, Thoracic Team, CBH, Boigu PHC 9th  
 9 - 10 Dec Renal Clinic, Dr Tim Furlong, T.I. H. OPD 9<sup>th</sup>, Bamaga H 10<sup>th</sup>  
 OT = Operating Theatre,  
 PHC = Primary Health Centre  
 OPD = Out-Patients Department  
 No dates yet available for 2011.

## NPARC Emergency Numbers during Christmas / New Year Period

**Housing Complaints:** Ms Leandra Newman: 0427 115 570  
**House and Building Maintenance:** Mr Marsat Newman: 0427 115 570  
**Emergency and Complaints:** Lionel Solomon:  
**Water and Sewerage:** Mr Greg Agie and Mr Tom Phineasa snr will do a normal run.  
**Waste Management (bins):** Mr Ronsley Wapau, Mr Edward Solomon.  
**Animal Management:** Mr Lionel Solomon.  
**Last Mail run:** Wed 29<sup>th</sup> Dec (Mr Lionel Solomon).

**Pre Wet Season Clean-up:** Seisia (6.Dec), New Mapoon (6. Dec), Bamaga (7. Dec), Umagico (8. Dec), Injinoo (8. Dec). All enquiries call 4069 3419, Works Office, Umagico.

If you have just given birth to a child, it is important to see a Health Professional at a Medical Health Centre or the Hospital.

## National Immunisation Program Schedule for Queensland

Teke youpla piknini to health clinic when:

**At birth**  
**2 months**  
**4 months**  
**6 months**  
**12 months**  
**18 months**  
**24 months**  
**4 years**  
**Year 8**  
**Year 10**

Protect umpla piknini prom kese sik.

**Give your child the best chance in life** by bringing it to a Health Centre or Hospital for immunisation when it is a certain age (see left column).

**Immunisation is important for children.** Immunisation helps to protect the child from serious childhood diseases, but also others in the community by increasing the level of immunity and minimizing the spread of disease. Immunisation can protect against Diphtheria, Hepatitis A and B, Measles, Meningococcal C disease, Mumps, Whooping cough, Polio, Rubella, Tetanus, Chickenpox and many other diseases. Vaccines trigger the immune system to make antibodies to fight against certain diseases. They use the body's natural response to disease so if a vaccinated person comes in contact with the disease, their immune system will respond by stopping it to develop or greatly reducing its severity.

Immunize Australia Hotline: **1800 671 811**

Website: <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/>

Source: Queensland Health



Don't do weeds, dear, stick to your greens.

We are all individuals, each is unique, unlike any other.

Yes, we're all the same.



Mum, what will be the consequence of no consequences?

It'll be another, dear.





### Mr Vincent Babia:

Mr Vincent Babia is working on a drum, under his house at Seisia. The drum features a large crocodile, Aith Kadal clan. The crocodile's body symbolises the father's side. The croc's tail symbolises the mother's side, in the form of two wild yams, known as 'Dhoebau' (image right).

'Ghotoba titui' is the morning star, carved near the head of the croc. The drum is made of cotton tree, brought in from Saibai.

The Head-dress is known as 'Dhidal'. This is for Saibai only, which is different from other Torres Strait designs. It is about the 'Rain Spirits'. Crane feathers from local birds complete the head-dress.



Mr Vincent Babia is a traditional dancer, who had visited American Samoa, and recently performed at China's Expo. Image above, Mr Babia during Yumpla Festival 2009.



'Mawa' (above) is a face mask used for ceremonies, only men wear it.



The three masks are called 'Tari'. Tari is the name used on eastern islands, while 'Thoeri' is the name in top western and western islands.

The frame without feathers is called Bomeh.

Crane feathers are added to complete the work.

The masks are used in dancing, like the war dance, ceremonial dance, or happy dance.



The detail shows a lot of work has gone into it. Each reed is wrapped with woven string.



A model of a 'Makarr', a racing outrigger. In full size it would be 9m long and could carry four people. The model is used to test the speed of the design in the water, before building a full size version. If the model is slow, then the full size version would also be slow. One of the biggest vessels is 20m long. 'Gul' is a large vessel that can accommodate 60 people.



## “We can make a big difference...”

...and they surely did. Previous generations grew up in a world where virtually every week a new gadget or appliance came on the market, each with a lead and three pins, each needing



nursing from a socket in the wall. There is not a house in the country with enough power points to feed them all. Times are changing. At Tamwoy Community Hall, T.I., seven schools came together to share with each other their experiences in reducing our power consumption.



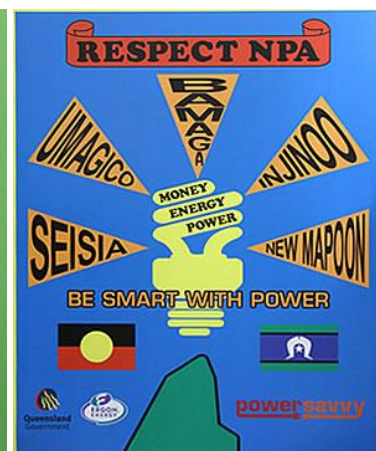
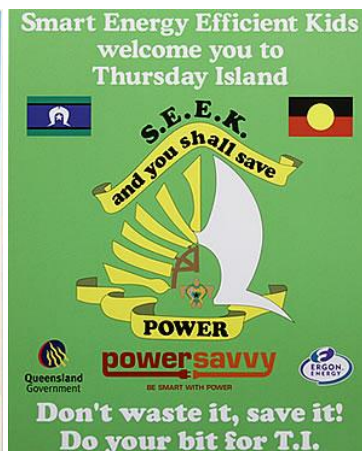
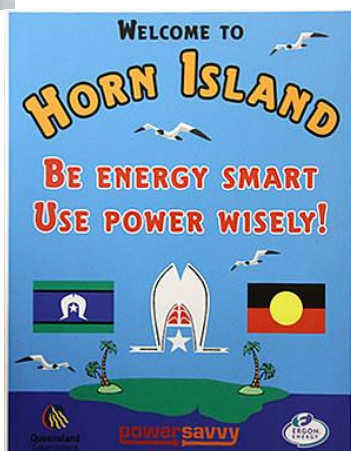
Two young Masters of Ceremony (Kelly Marrington (Tagai Primary) and Nelson Foster (Horn Island Campus)) introduced Horn Island, NPA Bamaga Secondary, Injinoo Primary Campus, Tagai Primary, Tagai Secondary Campus, and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.



gadget or appliance came on the market, each with a lead and three pins, each needing

Mr Clive Dixon, Regional Executive Director, Far North Queensland Region and Mr David Heberlein, Acting General Manager for Energy Conservation and Demand Management, Ergon Energy opened the meeting.

Mr Dixon, “The whole power savvy idea is one which working through our children brings all sorts of new knowledge in this area... ...we learned a lot from our children. I know in some cases, in other schools where this has been done in Cairns, those kids have gone home and made a bit of a nuisance of themselves, making sure the parents and all the relatives, sisters and brothers and everyone else really understood what this power savvy agenda was all about. We even had one of the regional schools come into our office in Cairns, and we had the whole floor in an office building that is a bit like a submarine, none of the windows open, it’s all air-conditioned, everything is electrical. They surveyed everybody, then they come into our office, went around and put stickers on everything. They got all the results; they did a whole report, pulled the staff together in the conference room. They reported back to our staff and they said: ‘This is what you need to do, to make your office a power savvy area.’ And then, blow me down... about 12 months later, they did another survey... another audit on the office, just to see how well they were doing. (They) got the staff together and gave them some really strong feed-back.”



Each school created posters, stickers, slogans, and carried out a whole lot of research.

Each Campus presented a static display, as well as educational, entertaining and thought provoking on stage presentations. Students presented ‘power savvy’ staff with certificates of appreciation for their help in reducing the footprint each school leaves in greenhouse gases and fuel consumption. All power in the NPA and all outer islands is produced via diesel generation. It costs diesel to ship diesel (cost per litre at the bowser is \$2.20 (NPA, varies) and higher still on the islands). The power savvy program is supported by Ergon Energy, the local provider of electricity.



Ms Gaylene Whenmouth, Communications Manager for the power savvy project: “What we’re doing here today, we call this day ‘powering to success’ and it’s a presentation where all the seven schools from Horn Island, Thursdays Island, and the NPA are coming together to show off the things that they have done, as part of the school work for power savvy. During this year we had Mr Geoff (Biff) Barfort (Power Saving Education Officer), he has been working with all of the schools to run an Energy Efficiency Program (funded by the Office of Clean Energy). The kids have taken this on board and have done all sorts of things to save power around their school, and today they are coming together with all the other students from all the other schools to show what they have done, and the results of their activities. It has also been a little bit of a competition, and we have worked out which school has saved the most energy during the year, and so they are going to get this magnificent prize of a big LED TV and some accessories (valued at \$3500). That’s a prize for the school that has been the most power savvy. So really, that is what today is all about.”



Student Eden Kennedy (right, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Primary, T.I.), "We've learned a lot. We've learned that it's not good to have more than 3 minutes in the shower. That wastes hot water, and hot water wastes energy, and if we use too much energy, it will go up into the atmosphere. We don't want that. We've just installed solar panels in our roof, our school roof, on the library and on the main building. That generates power from the sun, so we won't have to use as much power made by men."



The NPA Schools started their presentation by switching the front lights off. In anticipation the eye wondered to see if any of the ceiling fans would slow, if the hum of the air-cons would cease, if we all were made to feel what it's like to live without the comforts of power, perhaps a voice announcing 'We are saving heaps now.' It turned out none of this happened. The partially darkened hall helped focus on the projected presentation, compiled by the NPA campuses.



Both campuses from Tagai presented excellent presentations, entertaining and informative from Primary Campus, and a more in-depth approach from the Secondary Campus.



Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Primary gave their presentation in the form of a TV report, including off site video report, on the spot live interviews, the weather and finance, all in some way relating to the subject at hand, be that cost of power, the rising costs of goods, or the effects of higher tides, which the communities living on the islands know only too well.

Mr David Heberlein announced the winner of the 'Most Energy Efficient School Competition,' Bamaga Primary Campus. Bamaga's High School energy consumption was measured between June and July and again this year. The comparison showed a reduction of 22%. "Certainly the energy usage across the whole year definitely declined steadily, so it was remarkable," explains Ms Whenmouth. "The next best was T.I. Primary and they saved 17%." The NPA students explained the power station uses 10,000l of diesel fuel each day to

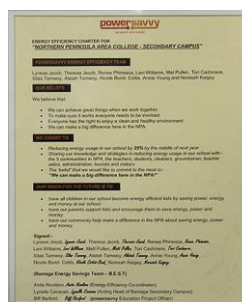


provide for the 5 NPA communities. The Energy Efficiency Carter for NPA College, Secondary Campus states: We believe that: We can achieve great things when

we work together. To make sure it works everyone needs to be involved. Everyone has the right to enjoy a clean and healthy environment. We can make a big difference here in the NPA!

The school's *powersavvy* Energy Efficiency Team has put their commitment in writing: Reduce energy usage in our school by **25%** by the middle of next year. Sharing our knowledge and strategies in reducing energy usage in our school with the 5 communities in NPA, the teachers, students, cleaners, groundsman, teacher aides, administration, tourists and visitors. The 'belief' that we would like to commit to the most is: **"We can make a big difference here in the NPA!"**

*They certainly have, and one might add, 'a difference everywhere.' Congratulations to all participating students from all schools. They have accomplished a remarkable reduction in fuel usage with the help of their teachers and the powersavvy team. With the right guidance these students can and will achieve great things, because they already know they can.* 29<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2010



The Finance Report			
Commodity	January 2010	October 2010	Change
Whitfish	\$34.50 per kg	\$75.50 per kg	118.84%
Queenfish	\$30.00 per kg	\$60.99 per kg	103.30%
Craytails	\$99.00 per kg	\$189.00 per kg	90.91%
"Fush 'n' Chups" at Br	\$3.00 singl serv	\$1.50 singl serv	-50%
Damien's Kiwi TakeAway	\$1.90 per litre	\$3.95 per litre	107.89%

The Finance Report reveals little joy, unless you're into 'Fush 'n' Chups.'



One of the students eyeing up the prize.



NPA Campus receiving award.



# Dan Ropeyarn Cup



**"Lead by example, inspire others. With hard work, your goals and dreams can be achieved."**

**Day 1:** Games played on the day (4<sup>th</sup> November):

Women's: Sunset Cruisers vs Red Dust Renegades;  
 Women's: Bindal Sharks vs Bau au Stingers;  
 Men's: Eels vs Wall Kes;  
 Men's: 8HB vs Chiverry Warriors;  
 Men's: Injinoo Crocs vs Barracudas;  
 Men's: Dhoemy Brothers vs Roos;  
 Men's: Alau Eagles vs Winner of Game 1;  
 Women's: Bindal Sharks vs Sun Down Sirens;  
 Women's: Sunset Cruisers vs Dekun Gammars;  
 Men's: Waleku Raiders vs Winner of Game 2;  
 Men's: JJ Brothers vs Winner Game 3;  
 Women's: Bau au Stingers vs Sun Down Sirens.

The official opening ceremony started with prayers by Ama Mary. Traditional Owner, Mr George (Rusty) Williams conducted the Welcome to Country. Speech.

NPARC CEO, Mr Stuart Duncan, "Remember the coach who taught you to tackle for the first time. Remember the others who played with you and against you, and got you to this point here today. Remember the fans and supporters who raised monies to fund your equipment thru the years. Remember the family members who encouraged you to go on, when you wanted to quit, who dropped everything to take you to practice and attend your games. Take this time to remember all of them... Remember our motto is 'Respect NPA' and that is what council asks you do while you are here, and above all, enjoy the competition and return home safe at the end." The sentiments were also reflected by Mr Wayne Guivara (TSY&SA).

Committee member, Ms Patricia Nona, "Dan Ropeyarn inspired others to do great works leading by example, by demonstrating what hard work and dedication goals and dreams can achieve. We in the NPA have a high rate of chronic disease and poor health, and it was identified we must inspire our youths to become fit and exercise regularly, to have better health for the future."

A slideshow, projected onto a large blow-up screen gave all some memories of the Ropeyarn Cup history over the last 10 years. Colourful fireworks lit up Bamaga sky over Yusia Ginai Memorial Oval.

**Day 2:** Dan Ropeyarn Cup Day pays tribute to the man, the late Mr Dan Ropeyarn. It is a public holiday in the NPA (5<sup>th</sup> Nov).

The  
2010  
Cup



saw the participation of women's teams taking part in the competition.

*The Dan Ropeyarn Cup benefits all, by training and exercising, by doing something for our health. It is this that the cup is all about.*

*Getting the best chance in life starts with our parents, no alcohol, drugs or smokes whilst pregnant. Immunisation for serious childhood diseases, a loving family environment to nurture the young, to encourage them to wear shoes, to teach personal hygiene, to treat every tiny cut, each helps to grow a strong healthy child. Growth continues in home and school education, in setting goals and dreams in life.*

***The late Mr Ropeyarn has achieved much for his people. It is a legacy that has his name shine long after his passing, over 11 years ago. It is in each of us to achieve great things.***

Inscribed on the Cup, the Legends:

2000 – Western United  
 2001 – Kulpiyam  
 2002 – Injinoo Crocs  
 2003 – Badu Kulpiyam  
 2004 – Kulpiyam  
 2005 – Eagles United  
 2006 – Eagles United  
 2007 – Eagles United  
 2008 – Dolphins  
 2009 – Argun Warriors  
 2010 – Alau Eagles



"Prize money was \$10k for the first 3 or 4 years, until we got support from Injinoo Enterprise (\$15k for the last 5 years). The prize money went up to \$20k, with \$10k for second," says Ms Patty Nona (Yusia) who has been involved with the Cup since its beginning. "We've always given the players initiative, they get a trophy and a prize, for different categories."

Special acknowledgment goes to the many organizations who supported the Dan Ropeyarn Cup: Torres Strait Youth and Sport Association, NPA Family and Community Services, Queensland Health, Seisia Enterprises (Meat Works), Seisia Car Hire, Rob's Earth Moving Equipment, Peddell's Ferry and Bus Tours, Bamaga Resort, Seaswift, NPARC,



Skytrans, B&B Electrical, Menshed, Seisia Holiday Park, Cape York Plumbing, IBIS, Bamaga Dreamtime, Yusia Earth

Moving, Torres News, and Jess Lawn Mowing. Thank you also to all essential services in the NPA, who were on standby throughout the games (Ambulance, Fire truck, Community Police,



Police, Hospital and health staff.) Esso to the many volunteers, the crews erecting fences, security, lighting, clean-up teams, referees, transport, and the organizing committee, each important participants to lift the cup to the high standards it has achieved.



Elders Mr Meun Lifu and Mr George Williams.



NPARC Chief Executive Officer  
Mr Stuart Duncan





Maluka enjoying the day.



Team from Palm Island (above).



Airborne try in the making (Crocs vs Barracudas) ...and a clean conversion (below).



Palm Island vs Injinoo.



Badu Team before the match.



Spectacled spectator.



Live to air.



Slideshow of the past (above).



Mr Wayne Guivara (TSY&SA).



The first ever **Contemporary Dance Competition** at the Cup was enjoyed by all. Another first was the participation of **Women's Teams** in NPARRL.



A good pair of shoes helps to keep balance. All the NPRL players had shoes on.



Between breaks the ground belonged to the young...



...with or without balls.





**"I bin tak e dis thing come dis far, e up to youpla now for take m from yar go on top"**

The late Mr Dan Ropeyarn was born in the Old Village, Cowal Creek, Injinoo, on 16<sup>th</sup> October, 1940. He passed away on 1<sup>st</sup> September, 1999. He was also known as 'Bush' and 'Garth.'

Our Dan yarn story blo Injinoo an em bin speak dis kind.  
**"I bin tak e dis thing come dis far, e up to youpla now for take m from yar go on top."**

*These words are printed on a booklet, published at the time of Mr Ropeyarn's funeral, telling the story of his life. Mrs Cecilia Ropeyarn is the widow of the late Mr Dan Ropeyarn. It is with the permission of Mrs Ropeyarn and daughter, Mrs Gina Nona that this material is shown here.*

**Family:** The late Mr Dan Ropeyarn was the son of the late Mr Ned Martin Ropeyarn and Mrs Bethena Ropeyarn (nee Maratha). He was husband to Mrs Cecilia Ropeyarn (nee Brisbane), and father of Gina, Steven, Barbara (dec.) and Kales. He was brother of Kara, Elaine, Emily, Ella, Mary, Timothy, Patricia (dec), Lucy, George, Jimmy, Johnny, Marcia, Patrick and Guistina. He was grandfather of Tolowa (Jnr), Josie, Eileen, Cecelia, Daniella, Maureen and Daniel (Jnr).

He was nephew of George Williams, Rene Hobson, Fanny Bowie, Nagi (dec), and Steven Ropeyarn (dec), Dan Solomon (dec), Daniel and Nema Maratha (both dec), Kales Tamwoy (dec), Angelina Martha (dec), Reuben Maratha (dec), Arthur, Silas, and Pedro Woosup (dec), Gertie Serubi (dec), Paul Sagiba, Genua Gebadi (dec), Alan, Mark, Saul, and Alick Sagiba (dec), Maria Moloney and Agnes Tyfer.

He was Uncle, Brother in Law and Cousin Brother to Aboriginal and Islander people throughout Cape York.

**Life:** The late Mr Ropeyarn was schooled at Old Cowal Creek School, Injinoo. He worked for Island Industries Board at Thursday Island in 1956, with Waraka Adidi. In 1957, he was diving for the Trochus Shell Boat 'Palaron,' skippered by his Uncle, Daniel Solomon (dec). In 1958, he worked the Garage and Sawmill, employed by Department of Native Affairs. He married Ms Cecilia Brisbane in 1962. Between 1964 and 66 he worked as Haulpack and Plant Operator for Comalco, Weipa, and with The Flying Gang on freight, road works and airport construction. In 1967 he returned to Weipa to work for Comalco as a crusher operator until Dec 1971. From 1972 to 83 he worked for Department of Northern Peninsula as Foreman for the Flying Gang, until he went on strike over the unfair payment of local workers by the Government. He was elected Chairman of the Cowal Creek (Injinoo) Council.

In 1984 he became the General Overseer for the Department of Aboriginal and Islander Advancement, with the changes to fairer conditions for local workers beginning.



With the start of the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP), which he worked to have introduced in Injinoo in May 1988, he resigned from the DCS and became full time General Overseer at Injinoo. He took up the position of Land Management Coordinator from 1994 – 96.

In 1992, not long after the purchase of Pajinka, he suffered kidney failure and four times a day had to fill

and drain two litres of fluid exchange bags through a catheter inserted through the side of his body. He did this for four years, until he could no longer use that cleaning system. As there were no dialysis machines north of Cairns, he had to move there with his family in 1996, returning to Injinoo as often as he could between dialysis.

**His works:** Under his Chairmanship he worked to see his community grow, progress and take shape of its own destiny. He took responsibility for the fund raising to build the Church of St Michael's and All Angels, for which he was the Church Warden. He constructed the Lookout and established the Old Village as a recreation area for community organized sports days and other community events.

From his first election as chair he sought to change the name officially from Cowal Creek to Injinoo. The Government finally agreed in 1987. He started discussions with the State Government for the issuing of the first Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) for the Injinoo people.

He introduced the CDEP Scheme and organized the construction of the Community Hall and Council office with all the work being done by the local community.

When the DCS refused to provide Injinoo with plant and equipment to carry out their own community works, he organized loans to get the community their first Freight Trucks, Grader, Dozer, Backhoe and Community Bus. Under his council a community store, fuel bowser, variety store and readymix plant were established. The profits from these enterprises helped pay the loans and created employment for the community.

He met with Federal Ministers for Aboriginal Affairs and travelled to Canberra to argue for the return of Pajinka to the Injinoo people, creating employment for people from all the communities in the Northern Peninsula.

Image shows the late Mr Daniel Ropeyarn organizing the raising of the Aboriginal flag at Pajinka, in October 1990, after the official incorporation of Cape York Land Council.





He expanded the existing housing program, saw the construction of the community workshop. He was responsible for the building and upgrading of the major roads in the Northern Peninsula, increasing access for community members to the east and west coast, as well as the bypass roads from the south.

He ensued that Injinoo became a member of the Aboriginal Coordinating Council (ACC), when the Government wanted to force the community into the ICC. He was one of the founding elders for the Cape York Land Council. He organized the Injinoo Land Summit, where the Cape York Land Council was incorporated.

He argued for and organized the re-establishment of the Injinoo Primary School that had been closed by the Government in 1970. He began the process for the construction of the Injinoo Health Centre. He argued for and instigated the Sewerage Scheme and oversaw the development of the Town Plan for Injinoo with expanded housing sub-divisions.

As the most qualified and experienced operator of plant and equipment in the Northern Peninsula, he taught most of the operators today and encouraged them to get their Operator Ticket, usually working without pay on weekends.

He held major community public meetings to ratify the major decisions of Council and to discuss issues of community concern. He saw the development of Injinoo Community By-Laws ensuring they reflect Aboriginal values and community views.

He insisted that Injinoo take responsibility for the Jardine Ferry and began the establishment of the Jardine River Roadhouse and camping area.

Despite his illness he brought together the Apudthama Association in 1993, to campaign for the return of the Injinoo peoples' Traditional Lands, with the people living at Injinoo doing the work.

After the return of Pajinka, the Mabo High Court Decision, and the passing of the Native Title Act, he organized meetings to try to establish a Regional Agreement to sort out land issues with the five communities in the NPA.

He established the Bush camp sites from Dulhunty River to Muttee Head and Somerset, and began the construction of the Atambaya Outstation, to prevent the State Government and the Cook Shire using the McDonnell people's land for a Tourist operation.

He organized the first Anthropological and Archaeological work done on Injinoo land and the recording of Injinoo language. He took responsibility for the organization of all community cultural events, including funerals, tombstone openings, land meetings, return to country, football fundraising, and sought to resolve intra-community disputes. He organized for up to 100 people to attend annual Land Summits and the Laura Dance Festival.

He led his people in Traditional dance and song, and was a great story teller, hunter and fisherman. He was a man for his people most of his waking hours. He gave his life for his people.



Mr Steve Ropeyarn.



Mr Steve Ropeyarn (above), son of the late Mr Dan Ropeyarn, takes the honorary kick to open one of the matches.

**Vision:** Dan had a vision for his people as a leader and true elder. His vision was of a free people in charge of their own lands, living according to their own laws, making their own decisions about their own future, living in a self-sufficient community, accepting of the people who come from elsewhere to live here, united as one people belonging to each other, working for their own well-being and happiness.

He wanted the children of Injinoo to be educated to take responsibility for every aspect of the community's living; in health, education, law, accounting, administration, housing and construction, community infrastructure and enterprise.

He wanted the Aboriginal people to be recognized and respected as the Traditional Custodians of the country and for the people to carry those responsibilities to both protect and use their land. It was his goal to have a Regional Agreement with all the communities in the NPA to sort out land use and management over all the land.

It was his vision for the tribes who came together over the last century to be one people, united in mutual respect and love, based in Injinoo, but with outstations spread over all the country, with all the people benefiting from the resources of the lands, not motivated by greed, jealousy or hatred. It was his hope that in his life he would lay the foundation for such a future, so that those who took responsibility after him would carry his vision and see it become reality.

*Special thanks to Mrs Cecilia Ropeyarn and families for sharing this information.*

*Image: Mrs Gina Nona, Daughter of the late Mr Dan Ropeyarn.*





## Dan Ropeyarn Cup 10 years on

Ms Patty Nona (Yusia): "The Dan Ropeyarn Cup strengthens family connections. We have families coming from Torres Strait to all the way down south, who have never seen their families before. You may have seen them last over 10 years ago, but in this carnival, you happen to see them. Basically they come with different knowledge, they interact with families, they tell stories to the families. I feel that strengthens our culture, and over the years I've seen, people are looking forward for this carnival, because they don't know who is going to come. Given that some of the families have lost their identities and... you just get a shock at the carnival, it reunites the family and strengthens the ties more. The other thing I've noticed, people are looking forward to the carnival, so they get really prepared because it's a very competitive sport. When their children or husbands are training, I see the women are actually walking too. There is basically equity happening. If the man is training, the woman is training too. If that mentality spreads throughout the community, that will come down to the kids too. The lifestyle is they love their food. They are not doing much output of exercises. This carnival is to encourage people to do more exercises. I've seen that over the years they actually organize other sports, but it's not consistent. The cup has been consistent for the last 10 years. Consistent sport makes a difference. People will know that it is happening, they prepare for that, and there is a reward at the end. It might sound as if it is such a big money. Thirty players, and if you divide that, it's probably just \$400. It costs them a lot more to come here, expense wise, and also the food and travel. Normally we have over 1000 people more at the carnival. It is very important that community planning is put forward properly. Normally every year, it's only a few people that put the planning together, but a lot of people volunteer as well."

"Over the years there has been a volunteer committee running the cup, but given the amalgamation (of the 5 councils) happening, amalgamation is looking towards running a sporting association. Carnivals will come under sporting associations, so I don't think there will be different committees running carnivals. That will be run by the sports and rec officers under the council umbrella. They might have a different name then. But for us to reward the old bloke, he is a well known elder, has done a lot to the community, Mr Ropeyarn, Dan Ropeyarn. We selected Dan because he got the status in the community. He was a leader for many years. He was a traditional owner. He was a man with a wealth of experience and knowledge. He was always the front figure of the Aboriginal people in this region. We thought he would be an excellent role model for the community if we name the game after him. He died in 1999. In 2000 the family bought the cup. People know him very well, a very humble person as well. He was many things. He was operator / driver / machine driver. He developed roads, he was the main gang leader of the departments. Putting in roads from Jardine to Bamaga, all these roads through here. He was a well known hunter, very well built. He feed his family, traditional hunting, he was very skilled in that area. He would have been about 50 something when he died, a young man. He was Gina's father (Mrs Gina Nona). He also strengthened the Aboriginal identities. You know how they lost their identities through the movements of mission. He was the one really advocating for Aboriginal rights in these communities. He was the one who actually build the Land Council so that there is a better representation for Aboriginal people in these areas."

"My involvement for the last 10

years was mainly helping to have the carnival. I just want to acknowledge Queensland Health, because I work for Queensland Health. This was also driven from Queensland Health, to help the community develop the skills and planning, and to develop people in participating and confidence building. You have to be proactive; you have to



have confidence in speaking. Before every carnival we would have an enactment. We come into a room and we talk about how we talk to people. We don't raise our voice. We speak in a calm manner. In that way people don't respond violently back to us, because in the past we were very violent people. We smooth it out to the point where there has been sportsmanship, where in the past the players would run the referees, they would actually chase the referee. It was very violent. The supporters would throw things at the volunteers. The first year, the second year, then gradually once the rules, the ethics came in strong. It was very different in the past. The code of conduct of the sport wasn't embedded in. They could be fighting at the oval, but right now there is no fighting whatsoever. There are heavy consequences behind all that fighting."

In the past referees were driven off with Police escort, "That's very true. Mind you, going back 10 years, I'm really proud that back 10 years, we worked with the community on that, and the violence has reduced. There is more discipline. We've made very harsh decisions in the past, where we actually banned people from playing, and made sure they don't come into the carnival, banned them from that carnival. We had families getting angry with us. We knew that the families would be angry, but we had to. Some people, they didn't want to participate in the committee, because they know that what decisions we'll make, they can have some consequences back to the communities. But we were prepared for that. I was prepared to stand my ground, because with the team, with all the volunteers, because if we start leaning towards what people want we got to have guidelines here, then we might as well not have this carnival. We got to have the rules, and code of conduct and we follow them. Once the rules are breached, then we have to give them consequences, meaning there are heavy penalties. They could be dismissed from the carnival, or dismissed from coming into the carnival, that's why we set the securities."

### Volunteers of the Dan Ropeyarn Cup for the last 10 years:

Ms Patty Nona (Yusia), Mr Denis Getwan, President, Ms Josie Mooka, Mr Tolowa Nona, Mr Gabriel Bowie, Mrs Harriet Phineasa, Ms Cathy Salee, and Mr Robert Bagie. Thanks also to Ms Kate Field, Mrs Karen Sam, Ms Estelle Gebadi, Ms Mary Yoelu, Mrs Gina Nona, Mr Bernard Charlie, Ms Sonia Townson, Mr Nathan Campbell, and Mrs Kylie Sagaukaz.





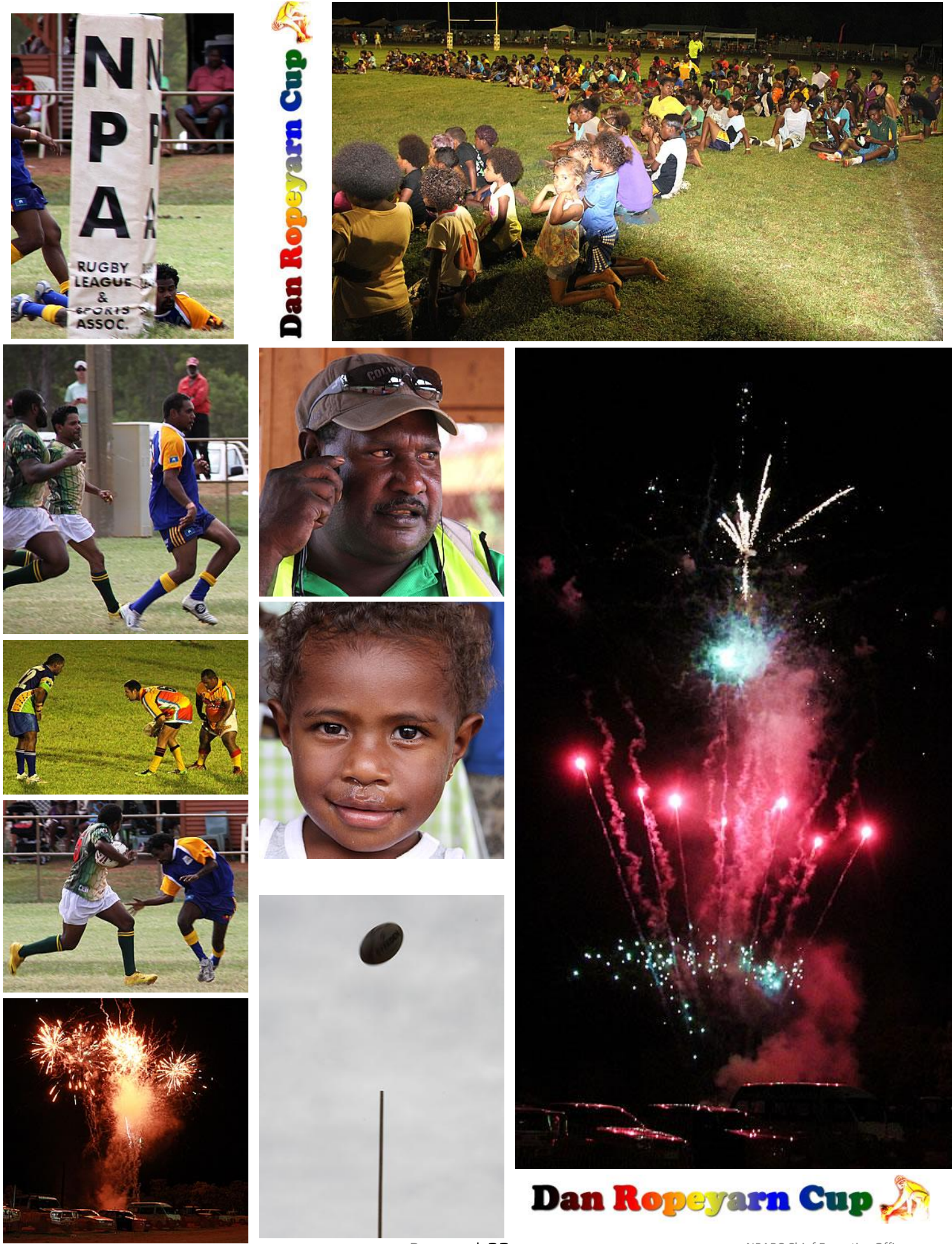
## Dan Ropeyarn Cup



### Music wanted for NPA Show DVD

Croc Lumley Productions are currently in the process of editing the NPA Show Video / DVD, the the horse race, bull rides etc. Mr Lumley is currently looking for local music to include in the DVD. If you have some recorded works (Band or individuals) call Mr Lumley on : 02 66870580 or email on : [crocmail@bigpond.com](mailto:crocmail@bigpond.com)









With a grin from ear to ear, no one chasing, the try line ahead, and plenty of time to place it exactly between the posts. Conversion followed.



**Dan Ropeyarn Cup** 



*Wishing everyone a safe and happy festive season.*

NPA News