

# NPA NEWS

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NPARC Chief Executive Officer  
Ilario Sabatino



NPA News Issue 52 will cover news and events from late August to December 2013.

**Yawo** I'd like to take a moment to say thanks for having me, and for welcoming me into your communities.

### Welcome to the team!



Robert Neilson  
Financial Accountant

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Robert Neilson, who joined our team as Financial Accountant in September this year. Originally from Gympie, Robert joins us straight from island life in Tonga where he worked with the Red Cross, and from Vietnam, Cambodia and Timor before that! Wishing to return to Australia for a while, Robert says he and his wife Sue are keen to explore the Strait and NPA region (as soon as the weather clears). Robert brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to this position, and an enthusiasm to learn about our region. Welcome to the community Robert, we look forward to working with you.

### Farewell



Russell Symons  
Community Services

We also say a very fond farewell to Russell Symons and his family. Russell has been a part of the NPARC family as Director of Community Services since 2009, based between our Cairns office and NPA Communities.

During his time with NPARC, Russell devoted his time to securing funding for community sporting equipment and facilities, community arts and beautification projects, events and disaster management work.

He will be missed for his positive attitude, hard work and his participation (if a little unwilling) in floral shirt Fridays. Ezzo for your dedication to our region and our communities, you will be missed.

But, after two years living in the red dust, I'm moving back home to my family in Brisbane.

It's been an amazing experience to work and live as a part of the communities and I'll be sorry to go. Since I started work here, I've always felt welcomed by community members and especially by my co-workers at NPARC.

A special thank you to my New Mapoon Office family, IKC ladies, the team at the Arts Centre and to the Apudthama rangers for going out of their way to make me feel at home, and showing me this beautiful country!

This job gave me the opportunity to experience Torres Strait culture at Thursday Island's Cultural Festival, camp at the Jardine mouth to see turtles lay, see our local artists promoted in Cairns at their NPA Art exhibition and even road trip to Laura to support our dancers— sometimes it hardly felt like work!.

I hope that in my role I've been able to help our communities and our region, as much as you've helped me. I hope to see the region grow in the years to come. This is an amazing place and the red dust has touched my heart.

Much love, and mina big esso for everything!



Jess—NPARC Media



## *Holiday Message from NPARC CEO*

I really enjoy this time of the year as it is when I reflect back on what has been achieved during the year both personally and at The NPARC. Overall 2013 has been a busy and very productive year for The NPARC and I feel very proud of what has been achieved and very appreciative of all the hard work put in by The NPARC team. They have supported organisational reviews and many corresponding changes and great challenges whilst continuing to maintain a high level of service.

It has been obvious that they are making a real difference in many people's lives, and without their dedication the numerous milestones that have been achieved this year would not have been possible. Other highlights include completion of major capital and infrastructure works including the rollout of housing for the community and the economic opportunities enjoyed including future housing and the positive impact that it will have on the local NPA economy.

There is no doubt that our team is one of our greatest strengths as an organisation, along with our culture. We talk a lot about how we make a difference and we are all truly privileged to work in a job where we can make a difference in the lives of others every day. It is really important that we continually recognise and appreciate that it is indeed we as a team who make the greatest difference, and not any one individual. Our team and the culture we foster underpin all the good work that we do, and the lives that we are able to help change.

To our staff, past and present I would like to personally thank you for your dedication, skill and commitment in contributing towards shaping the growth of NPARC as it is today and into the future. We continue to create something unique in serving our NPA clients and each of you has an extreme impact on the quality of service delivery in meeting community expectations and challenges. Furthermore, I extend appreciation to our partners across the tiers of government and NGO and local business partners for your continued support and contribution towards advancing the local economy. Finally, the community for continued guidance, determination and resilience through a rapidly changing operating environment.

Christmas is a time of celebration, joy and togetherness and I certainly hope that these sentiments can be enjoyed by all families connected with NPARC over this period.

I hope the New Year brings renewed hope, energy and success.  
Best Wishes,  
Ilario Sabatino  
Chief Executive Officer





Images courtesy of Rowena Mills



# *NPA Carnival 2013*



## NPA Carnival A Success

This year one event that will stand out in the minds of our communities as a mark of the year's success will be the recent NPA Carnival. The three day carnival showcased regional and visiting communities skills in basketball, darts and of course rugby league in the Carnival's main event, the Dan Ropeyarn Cup.

A big thank you to the NPA Carnival Committee, all teams and competitors, to all supporters and volunteers, and to NPA PCYC and My Pathways for their help.

A special shout out to Francis Bowie, Charlie Wasiu, NPA Carpenters Marsat Newman, Wilfred Bond and Edmond Ober and NPA Boilermakers Pat Bryden and Richard Sunai and to Director of Operations James Ware for getting the grounds ready for the events.

We are looking forward to the next carnival, expected to be bigger and better.

## Behind the Scenes

Reflecting on the success of the recent NPA Carnival, it is necessary to highlight the wonderful job by our NPARC Events team.

Our team spent months preparing for and working towards this event to ensure it was a safe and 'enjoyable tournament for all, an event that our communities could be proud of.

We would like to formally introduce our new Events Team, the legends who brought NPA Cup 2013 to our communities: Manager Aldene Reuben and Events Staff Ruby Neliman, Charlie Sagigi and Stanley Elu (who asked not to have a photo taken).

Deadly job guys, looking forward to events next year!

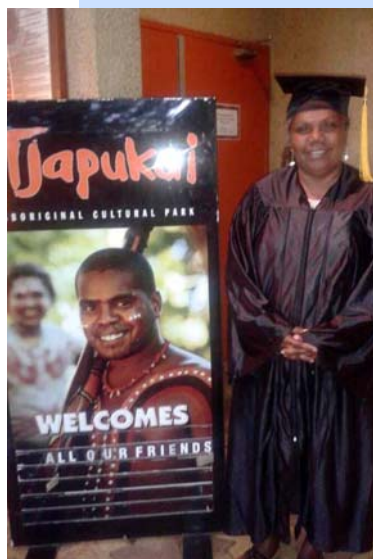
## Childcare Workers Graduate



Congratulations to Loyla Mark on completing her Diploma in Early Childhood Studies and to Alicia Topping, Roma Mark and Maria Mark on completing their Cert III and starting their Diplomas.

The ladies celebrated along with other students at the Tjapukai Aboriginal Camp near Cairns, where rumour has it the show was stolen by Auntie Loyla's deadly shake a leg!

Our graduates would like to say a big esso to their tutors Lynne Smith and Dembra Conlon and to Brother Johnny Mark for his support.



Thanks to Alicia Topping for supplying graduation photos





## Working with DAFF

Apudthama Rangers have been working closely with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry over the past few months to continue monitoring our region for presence of exotic pests and diseases.

DAFF team members camped with rangers to conduct a feral pig management project just south of the Jardine River Mouth.

At this time of year it is especially important to keep the number of feral pigs down, as the nesting sea turtles lay along the coastline of Northern Cape York.



Pictured Right and below: Apudthama Rangers use chemical filled plastic spheres, which ignite after a short time delay, dropping them from the helicopter to achieve managed burn offs in dense scrub behind Jardine River mouth.

DAFF scientists were able to use the annual pig cull as a base to conduct autopsies on several beasts to search for signs of illness or exotic pests or disease. The autopsies allowed Rangers and DAFF to determine the health of the animals, and observe their dietary habits.

"There were no signs of any exotic pests or diseases," Apudthama Rangers Coordinator Warren Strevens said, "but there was proof of a lot of turtle eggs and hatchlings, so we know they are raiding the nests."

"The camp also doubled as an aerial burn off," Mr Strevens said, "we had use of the chopper for the aerial shoot, so we could also use it to conduct the burn off, which is much more efficient from the air."

From the chopper, Rangers are able to drop small plastic spheres, which shortly after being injected with potassium permanganate will ignite, allowing them access to dense scrubland.

Regular burn offs not only act as an accelerant for many native plants, whose seeds require heat to germinate, but also remove thick dead bush that could become a fire hazard to our communities if not properly managed.

This month Rangers also completed training in cattle bleeding, allowing them to further assist DAFF in their monthly cattle bleeds.







## Turtle Training and Tagging

Apudthama Rangers are the first Indigenous Ranger Program to manage their own turtle tagging program, established this year, with all data managed through iTracker. The program has attracted interest from other Ranger programs and local groups for it's success and innovation.

During the nesting season, several Apudthama rangers travelled to Old Mapoon to work with local ranger groups to develop their own tagging program. Also during the nesting season, members of the Normanton Ranger Program travelled to the NPA, camping with Apudthama rangers near the Jardine mouth to assist with the turtle monitoring camps.

A little closer to home, there was one more group of helpers to visit the camp this year, assisting rangers with tagging, weighing and nest monitoring.

"We had about 12 senior students from NPA College come out to the camp and help out," Ranger Dale Motlop said.

"They learned about what we do on the job and were able to help out too."

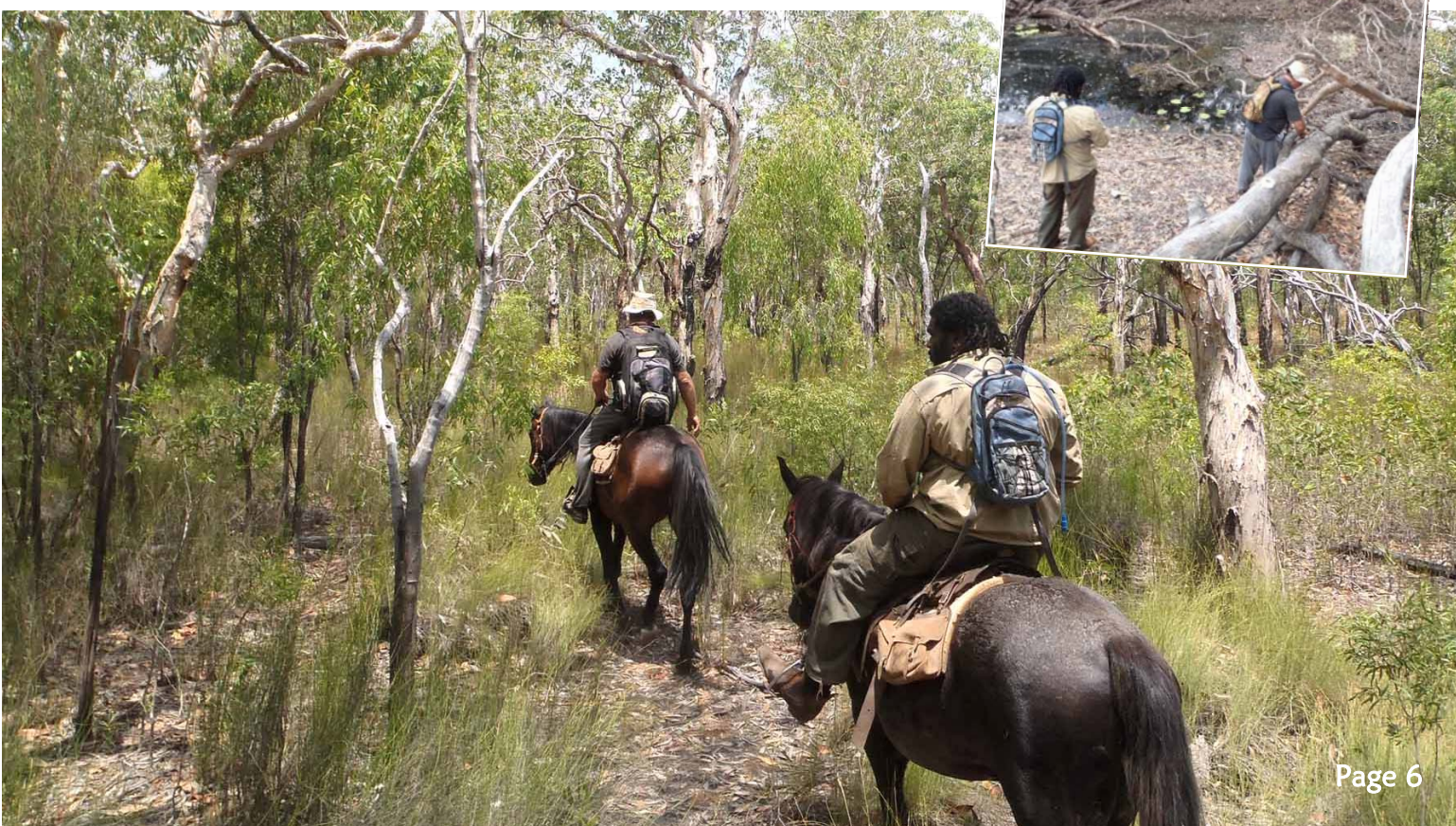
This month Rangers will be working with environmental scientists to collect temperature data from the nests to determine the effects of temperature on germination, gender of the hatchling and more.

## Scrub Cameras Deployed

After the burn offs, Apudthama Rangers were able to gain access to scrubland via horseback, to deploy scrub cameras.

The digital cameras operate via a motion sensor , allowing the camera to capture still shots of the bush when there is movement nearby, without disturbing the wildlife.

The data collected from these cameras can be used to understand which animals are inhabiting the area, and their interactions in their natural environment.







*NPA Hoops  
Grand Finals 2013*





## New Mapoon IKC Christmas Crafts

New Mapoon kids and youths have been showing the community how to recycle the proper way, using items from around the home to create these deadly works of art.

From puppet shows to papier-mâché and hand made Christmas wreaths, if there's materials to use, these kids have something to create.

If you have any materials; plastic bottles, cardboard boxes, etc, around your home you'd like to donate, please drop in and see New Mapoon IKC Coordinator Pauline Lifu.

NPA communities are serviced by Indigenous Knowledge Centers, acting as libraries and cultural information hubs to our communities.

IKCs offer access to computers, internet, and iPads, as well as local newspaper and newsletter archives, videos, books and more. Umagico Sporting Library also offers hire of sporting equipment and literature.

NPA IKCs are proudly supported by State Library of QLD and NPARC.

Contact your local IKC...

### Injinoo

Sandra Sebasio  
4069 3761

### Umagico

Lorraine Solomon  
4083 0333

### Bamaga/ New Mapoon

Pauline Lifu & Janelle Lifu  
4069 3444

### Seisia

Mabelene Whap  
4069 3883



## Seisia IKC Sea Shell Mobiles



\*Seisia IKC is now open from 10am-12noon on Saturdays, open to all community members and guests.

Contact Mabelene on 4069 3883 for more info.

Kids at Seisia IKC went for a stroll along the beach to find shells and branches to make their sea shell mobiles.

Using only the materials they found washed up on the beach of their home, the kids worked with Seisia IKC Coordinator Mabelene Whap to make the beautiful decorations which now hang on display at the IKC.

Images kindly supplied by Mabelene Whap



## Providing for Our Communities

The sweetest, the freshest, the best tasting fruit and vege is grown right here, in the red dust of our communities.

NPA farm is now supplying farm fresh organic produce to our communities, for sale through Alau Supermarket and from the farm gate.

Farm coordinator Mr Harrison Atu says the produce has been well received by community members so far, many heading over to the farm's gate to buy direct, others picking up their fresh produce from Alau store.

"At the moment we are supplying around 40kg of cassava to Alau Supermarket," he said, "as well as some rock melon, watermelon and other vegies."

In the last two months extra rows of cassava have been planted, in order to cater for the high level of local demand. Mr Atu says he expects to be supplying up to 100kg of cassava to the local store in coming months.

As the first rains of the wet season set in, farm workers are expecting higher yield of other produce as well, including capsicum, bananas, tomatoes, carrots and more.

"We are also looking at starting some hydroponics in the top shed, to grow leafy greens," Mr Atu explained, "and getting back into corn after the wet season as well."

As well as supplying delicious fruit and vege, Mr Atu says they should be supplying farm fresh eggs soon too, with the construction of the chicken coop almost complete.

With the bitumen road of the new Bamaga subdivision leading straight to the farm gate, and fresh produce on the shelves of our local store, it's never been easier to eat fresh in the NPA.

*NPA Farm is proudly supported through NPA Regional Council.*







HACC Respite. Every Tuesday

## NPA Black Dragons

NPA Black Dragon kickboxing club has finished up for the year, with students putting their skill and reflexes to the test in a few last sparring sessions.

Qualified instructors Drew Dibden and Caroline Thlang hope to start grading students in the new year, stepping up the caliber of the already intense training sessions.

"We'd like to try and bring our kickboxing instructor from down south up here to check out the group," Drew said at the final session.

Kickboxing will be back in 2013, contact NPAWS for more information on 4069 3555.





## NPA Rollout a Role Model

As the holidays near, NPA residents are encouraged to take a look at the outstanding progress made in social housing over the past 12 months. Councillor for Injinoo Anthony Mara said the success of the NPA social housing rollout this year has seen the plan be used as a template for other housing rollouts in remote areas.

“We fought for what we wanted and made sure the results were the best possible for our people and our communities,” Mr Mara said.

“It’s great to see so many families across the region settling into their new homes in time for the holidays,” said Deputy Mayor Eddie Newman. “The houses are beginning to look like homes as tenants start to plant gardens and put up Christmas lights, it’s really great to see. It makes all the work we put into fighting for the right design and delivery of the homes worth while.”

A big thank you to our dedicated housing staff, who put their hearts into the job to see this housing roll out result in such a success.



### Symbol of Strong Culture

At a recent gathering of board members representing communities across QLD, Councillor for Injinoo Anthony Mara (representing Cape York Communities) presented members with ornamental size hand carved whaps created by NPA Artist Vincent Babia.

“The significance of the whap is to remind them on the use of that instrument in our day to day lives, and the strength of our culture that still runs so strong through our communities,” Mr Mara explained.

The representative members were moved by the gesture and the significance of the gift presented to them.

Board members discuss policies and future growth in our regions, advising the Queensland Government, helping to shape our communities’ futures.



### We Will Remember Them

Sights are already set on the new year, with renovations and maintenance work on ANZAC Park increasing in the new year.

NPA Mayor and Elected Councillors have extended an invitation to our local regiment, Charlie Company, to march in the Bamaga ANZAC parade in 2014.

With the help of NPA Menshed, NPARC operations staff will have the park up and ready to host the memorial event early next year.



### NPA Open Boys Team

NPA College Open Boy’s team recently made the journey to Abergowrie College, just outside of Ingham, to compete in the Matty Bowen 7 a’side Rugby League Carnival, held in celebration of the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the College. Though the competition was cancelled due to last minute cancellations, the NPA team was still able to compete in scratch games against teams from Palm Island and Djarragun College.

“It was still a great opportunity,” said NPA Deputy Mayor Edward Newman, who travelled down with the teams, “because we got to take the boys out, play a few games and even got to go to and watch a Cowboys vs Newcastle Knights Game at the stadium in Townsville.”

\*Images courtesy of Eddie Newman



## NPA Volunteer Emergency Services

Once again, our regional volunteer emergency services team have donated their time to training for first response in the case of a road crash emergency.

Members of NPA SES continued their training in road crash response this August, practicing techniques in a controlled scenario re-enactment.

In previous years, the skills and actions of our volunteers has saved many lives in our region, but for the service to continue, we need to make sure there are the numbers to support.

SES relies upon the dedication of volunteers across Australia, donating their time to better their communities. If you would like to become a volunteer with NPA SES, or just check it out, all are welcome to attend regular training sessions, call NPARC Community Services on 4048 6607 for more information. By volunteering with NPA SES you will have the opportunity to learn new skills, to operate tools and machinery and learn to work within an emergency situation.

We'd like to thank our current active members: Xavier Barker, Katie Tatnell, Trent Kirk, Sue Booth, Gregory Booth, Louis Bouchet, Calan Byrnes, Joseph Ransfeld, Aaron Kerley, Dale Mears and Chinelle Ormsby.

This month we also farewell long time member Katie Tatnell, who sadly will be moving from the region. Since joining the NPA SES in 2011 she has completed training and gained qualifications in Rural Fire Fighting and Emergency Response to take on the role of NPA Rural Fire Service First Officer. Thanks for your service Katie, all the best.



\*Please note, all images display a training exercise.







\*Pictured above: NPA College Mural, painted by local indigenous artists Teho Ropeyarn and Vincent Babia

# NPA College

## Education for everyone



*NPA College Principal Gordon Herbertson says there are many exciting new plans for the College in the new year.*

### Yumpla (Day 4 Celebrations)

**When:** Day 4, Term 1, 2014

**Who:** All NPA residents invited.

PP-Yr2 students 1/2 day, senior students whole day.

**How much:** It's free!

Help us to secure more teaching positions at our college by attending the Day 4 Yumpla celebrations. There will be fun and games, traditional kaikai and more. We need to have our kids enrolled and at school by Day 4 and Day 8 to secure the teaching positions necessary for our college to operate at it's highest standards.

Please help, have your kids *attend* school every day!

Contact NPA College on 4090 4333

Congratulations to all students who graduated with year 10 and 12 certificates this year, you've worked hard and put in the hours of study and now it's paid off.

This year NPA college will farewell many graduating students and valued staff members, and we thank them all for their time and dedication to education in our communities. We also welcome many new faces for the new year, to all new students to enroll, new teachers and also new College Principal Gordon Herbertson.

"With the new year, we hope to see many plans come into fruition," Mr Herberston said, "what we really want is to see more community involvement in the school, we're all in this together."

Mr Herberston said that as a response to community suggestion of starting school later (which was rejected due to only 40% of parents showing support, while 60% preferred to keep school hours the same), the college will be offering a homework club at the senior campus library from 8:45am-9:15am where students can access the library and volunteering staff members to help with their work. They also recognise the homework club held at Seisia IKC by senior school teacher Mr Byrnes, where students are able to seek help with their work.

Have a great Christmas Break, looking forward to seeing everyone refreshed and ready for the new year at the Yumpla Day 4 Celebrations. Remember, attendance is the key.







## NPA Judoka

The NPA Judo club has been going from strength to strength. Since its beginnings in 2012 as the first judo club to be established in our Communities, the NPA Judo Club now boasts the highest membership of any registered club in the Australian Judo Union.

"This year the NPA State College included judo among its activities in the Active After School program," said Sensei Xavier Barker, "and received much needed support from Aaron Kerley, Lauren Mathers and Jessica Crummer as we found ourselves with almost twice as many children on the mat as we were used to."

With the club's growth came well deserved attention from clubs further south, resulting in an invitation to attend the Cairns Regional Judo Championships, held in August. Though our judoka were competing against many other competitors with many years of training behind them they stood up well against the strong competition, taking home 3 regional championships, 3 runners-up and 12 bronze medalists from the 25 NPA competitors, with the club placing 2nd overall.

"The club was also presented with an appreciation award from the Northern Beaches Judo Club and Coral Coast Judo Club to recognise the huge effort made by the club and community to get there," Sensei Barker said of the 1,000km road trip competitors and supporters took to get there.

Sensei Xavier Barker said the competition was a great way for them to see how far their skill have come in such a short time, gain some experience against other judoka and see further progress in the club. October saw the club grow stronger still, hosting their own event in celebration of World Judo Day, and supporting NPA Judoka Jack Zieth who travelled to Adelaide to contest the Special Needs Friendship Games, a biennial event that serves as the surrogate National Championships for special needs judo competitors.

"Jack was able to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> in his primary category (most able) and was given another award from the referees who acknowledged Jack's approach to his judo and his success on the day," Sensei Barker said.

NPA Judoka now have their sights set on the next upcoming event, the North Queensland Games, held in April. As always, a big thank you to all students, parents and supporters of the club, and of course to the Barker family who put in so much work behind the scenes just to see the club continue.

\*Competition photos courtesy of the NPA Judo Club, thanks to Roger Bartlett, Caroline Thlang and Sarah Liu.







### Adi Buya: Story of a Sacred Stone

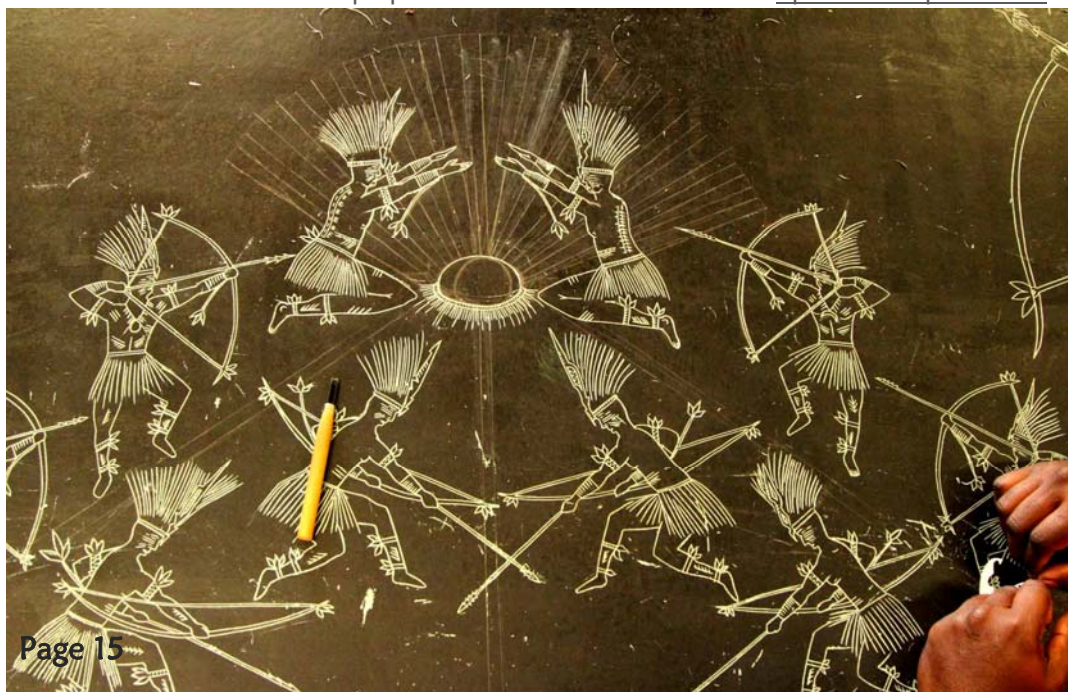
*The two Saibai warriors moved like stealth through the night. Their canoe cut through the black glass of the Torres Strait waters and slid soundlessly onto the sandy shore. Through the bush they could see a light shining. They had seen it before, a light that wasn't a star or fire, a light that was something else entirely. Parting the branches before them, they saw the source of the glow... A stone.*

The legend of *Adi Buya*, a glowing stone taken from Papua New Guinea, is passed down even to this day. It is told that two warriors saw the stone and recognised its power, battling many warriors to bring it back to their Island home. Before battle the warriors would rub oil on the stone to make it glow and each warrior would touch his arrow or spear head to the stone for luck in battle. These warriors then seemed impervious to their enemy's fire, seeming to become invisible and blessed with the ability to make impossible shots.

"Many years later, in the 1800s I think, there was an English professor who on a visit to the Strait saw the stone glowing in the dark," NPA Artist Vincent Babia explains, "he took it back to England with him, and that must be where the stone now rests."

Vincent tells the story of *Adi Buya* through a large lino carving, stretching 3m in length. He hopes to carry on the tales of his clan Ait Koedal through his work.

Keep up to date on all NPA Art news at [npaart.wordpress.com](http://npaart.wordpress.com)



The NPA Arts Centre is open to all visitors and artists who wish to view or purchase locally produced indigenous artwork or participate in workshops.



Once again our artists are pushing boundaries of indigenous art, creating colorful bags, hand embroidered with unique cultural designs.



Congratulations to Art Centre Coordinator Agnes Mark, who had her print 'Bush Tucker' sold through Gab Tithui Cultural Centre.



## Injinoo Dancers to Perform at Woodford Folk Festival

Injinoo dancers and supporters will make the journey to Woodford Folk Festival this year as one of the only two indigenous dance groups invited to perform. The Injinoo dancers, now well known throughout the Cape, nationally and even internationally, will be sharing local dance and culture along with the Pompuraaw Dance Troupe. The much anticipated grand finale performance boasts a joint performance that will leave spectators speechless.

Injinoo Dance Troupe Mentor Uncle Shorty says the dancers have been preparing new dances and perfecting old others, such as the well known *rat dance*, to give the best show they can. Fifteen dancers will make the journey to represent our community. The troupes will perform traditional dances and songs as well as a Malpa, a combination of dance theatre exploring of life on country, loss of knowledge and the challenges for the future, created especially for the 2013 festival.

"It's a great opportunity to not only promote our region and our culture, but also influence positive life choices for our youths," NPARC Youth Services Coordinator Roy Blanco said, "as about 70% of the troupe are aged between 13 and 25 years. Being a part of the troupe means they have to make positive choices, and they have the support from their teammates and elders."

The festival, held on the Sunshine Coast Hinterland on Jinibara country, is a week long celebration of indigenous and folk culture, attracting patrons from across the country and around the world. The Traditional Custodians of the Woodford land are members of the Jinibara Nation.

NPARC Youth Services and NPA PCYC proudly support the Injinoo dancers in their participation, and hope to bring the performance to our communities with a public screening.

The festival will be held from 27th Dec– Jan 1st at Woodford Festival grounds, just 1 hour from Brisbane. Injinoo Dancers will perform each night, with ABC iVew webcasting a live performance at 7:30pm on December 29th.





## ATODS Office Blessed

Special thanks to esteemed guests Rev. Mary Eseli, Injinoo Elder Aunty Cecilia Ropeyarn, Councillor Anthony Mara, TS/NPA Hospital Health Service Chief Executive Simone Kolaric and Member for Cook David Kempton for their participation in officially opening the Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs (ATODS) Office space at the Bamaga Hospital.

The ATODS team has been providing Drug and Alcohol treatment and education services for four years.

The service works to reduce the harms associated with alcohol and drug use on individuals, families and the community.

ATODS: 4090 4270, Bamaga Hospital.



### Island Beats

Traditional to the islands of the Pacific, hula dancing has gained popularity in recent months.

Thanks to NPA College Teacher Jodanna Tarrant who has been offering lessons in traditional Nauruan style dancing to both adults and children in our region.

Adult classes Wednesday evenings, 5:30pm at Bamaga Youth Centre and Kids classes Thursday afternoons, 4:30pm at Bamaga OSCH.

Contact NPAWS for more information on 4069 3555.



### Youth representative

Youth ambassador Aldene Reuben sets off this month to represent Cape York and Torres Strait youths at a leadership conference held in Perth.

"I hope to provide a voice to the youths of our region, and ensure our people and our generation are recognised," Aldene said.

Aldene, currently employed by NPARC as Events Team Manager, has also attended youth leadership conferences in Cairns and Canberra, acting as a voice for NPA and Torres Strait Youths.



### She's an Aussie!

Congratulations to Simone Leite on becoming an Australian Citizen, confirming her citizenship on 7th August and becoming possibly the first Aussie to become a citizen at the most Northern point of the country!

Since moving from Brazil in 2005, Simone has spent the last 5 years living and working in the NPA. She now runs her own Arts and Craft business, selling artworks from her store *Free bird Art*, in Seisia.

While Simone still retains her Brazilian Citizenship, she is proud to finally call herself an Aussie. And we are proud to have her!



## Nepalese Dreams

*There is a goat in the little hatch back next to us. He's standing in the back where the luggage should be, face pressed against the window, with a contented look on his little face, as if this is the most normal thing in the world. Then they are gone, swallowed by the heaving web of traffic cascading down the pot-holed roads of Kathmandu.*

Welcome to Nepal... "Have you ever been to the Asia before?" "Uhm, yeah I guess," I reply, "I spent a week in Tokyo once." He smiles, brown eyes twinkling, and I can tell this is going to be like nothing I've ever seen before.

For a country that is known for being home to the tallest mountain on Earth, it seems to me that there is much more going on at ground level. Stepping out of the house you are instantly immersed in the sights and sounds of the culture. Everyone seems to occupy the street at once, the dogs, people, cars, motorbikes— even cows, who are sacred here, so cruise casually down the road with the world as their oyster.

In Nepal, Hinduism and Buddhism co-exist, a mutual respect awarded to both throughout the nation. As such, temples, shrines and stupas are dotted throughout cities, villages and the countryside at every corner or another. Every second day seems to be a festival or religious celebration, the streets and homes are always alive with some form of celebration, it's pretty contagious. The animals are blessed, people are blessed, buildings and machinery are blessed and both the dead and the living are celebrated in unison.

I spent two and a half months in Nepal, with volunteer organisation *VCD Nepal*; living in Kathmandu, trekking in the stunning Annapurna Range, living in villages and sleeping on the busses in between. On my arrival, I was lucky enough to fall directly into the hands of the group that would become my family for the duration of my stay, and I guess we must have done ok, because leaving was the only downside.

*So that's why we missed NPA News for a few months, please take this story as way of making it up to you all! -Jess, NPARC Media:)*





# NPARC X-mas closedown 2013

## Alau Store Holiday Hours

Monday 23rd Dec—Normal Trading Hrs (8am-7pm)  
Tuesday 24th Dec (**XMAS EVE**) - 8am-8pm

### **CLOSED CHRISTMAS DAY & BOXING DAY**

Friday 27<sup>TH</sup> Dec—8am-7pm  
Saturday 28<sup>TH</sup> Dec—9am-1pm  
Monday 30<sup>TH</sup> Dec— 8am-7pm  
Tuesday 31<sup>ST</sup> Dec—8am- 7pm

### **CLOSED NEW YEARS DAY**

Thursday 2nd Jan— 8am-7pm  
Friday 3rd Jan—8am-7pm  
Saturday 4th Jan— 9am-1pm

## Bamaga Post Office

Bamaga Post office will be operating on regular opening times (9am-5pm), but closed December 25th, 26th and January 1st.

## Jardine Ferry Holiday Hours

(Normal Operating Hours)  
Saturday 21st Dec—8am-5pm  
Sunday 22nd Dec— 8-5pm  
Monday 23rd Dec—8-5pm  
Tuesday 24th Dec—8-5pm

### **CLOSED CHRISTMAS DAY**

(Reduced Operating Hours)  
Thursday 26th Dec—9am-12noon, 2pm-5pm  
Friday 27<sup>TH</sup> Dec—9am-12noon, 2pm-5pm  
Saturday 28<sup>TH</sup> Dec—9am-12noon, 2pm-5pm  
Sunday 29th Dec— 9am-12noon, 2pm-5pm  
Monday 30<sup>TH</sup> Dec— 9am-12noon, 2pm-5pm  
Tuesday 31<sup>ST</sup> Dec—9am-12noon, 2pm-5pm

### **CLOSED NEW YEARS DAY**

Thursday 2nd Jan— 9am-12noon, 2pm-5pm  
Friday 3rd Jan—9am-12noon, 2pm-5pm  
Saturday 4th Jan— 9am-12noon, 2pm-5pm  
Sunday 5th Jan—9am-12noon, 2pm-5pm

Jardine Ferry will resume normal Operating Hours (8am-5pm) from Monday 6th January 2014.



## Pre Wet-season Cleanup

The first storms of the season have already turned our backyards into lakes in just a matter of moments, but it's not too late to storm proof your home.

Check your yard for objects that might catch rainwater, creating the perfect breeding ground for mosquitos, such as buckets, old tyre rims, toys and rubbish. As tropical cyclones continue to threaten Northern QLD, be sure to keep your yard and street clear of debris that may become dangerous in heavy winds.

Please remember to dispose of your waste thoughtfully at the Regional Dump. If you require a skip for a big clean up, contact NPARC Environmental Services on 4069 3419.

## NPARC Christmas Closedown

As we inch nearer to the festive season , we are all looking forward to a well earned break. However, there are some services which we require to continue running to see our communities continue to operate over the holidays. Please be informed of the NPARC services X-mas Closedown schedule.

**NPARC offices and depots will be closed from 12pm lunch time on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> of December 2013 until return to work on Thursday the 02<sup>nd</sup> January 2014 .**

Essential Service staff will be working in a skeleton capacity to deliver rubbish removal services and water management.