



Waaanta

Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council
Web: <http://www.lockhart.qld.gov.au>
c/- Post Office, Lockhart River Q 4892
Ph: 4060 7144 Fax: 4060 7139

PO Box 1037, Cairns Q 4870
Ph: 4031 0155 Fax: 4031 5720
Email: ceo@lockhart.qld.gov.au

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Please note there may be images of deceased persons within this Newsletter.

Our Culture Our Future





A word from ...

Mayor Wayne Butcher

I'd firstly like to pay tribute to those we have lost over these past few months, and particularly a former Councillor and very much a leader in our community, the late Auntie V Piva, Lockhart River Mayor Wayne Butcher writes...

I will always remember her kindness, happiness and wisdom.

As a young leader I always reminded and built myself around influential Elders.

I had the privilege to be guided in meetings, forums, work, sporting and cultural events by some prominent Elders and leaders over the years, none more than this beautiful, kind and warm-hearted Elder.

People always say, "you only see the tip of the iceberg," which is very true – the amount of work that goes on behind the scenes is extraordinary.

I witnessed and experienced, over many years of working with Auntie V, her commitment to building and changing Lockhart community for the better.

She was priceless.

No words will ever describe her efforts!

As life goes on I will always personally acknowledge and applaud her commitment and leadership.

Auntie V Piva, you have a special place in my memories and my PUUYA (Heart).

RIP and know your spirit will always guide our Lockhart River community into the future.

Once again I'm proud of the Kawadji Wimpa Lockhart River Dance Team, who did our community extremely proud at the Laura Dance Festival this month.

We were certainly the crowd favourite.

After every performance during the festival I got some great feedback from spectators and other dance teams.

We only took young dancers

to highlight the cultural depth in our community, as we look forward to our next generation.

Laura was a competition, but I enjoyed the weekend showcasing and sharing Lockhart culture with other dance groups and audiences, regionally, state wide, nationally and internationally.

We, as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, have the oldest living culture in the world, 60,000 years old and we keep getting stronger.



Laura Festival fun!





Sunday at Laura Dance Festival and Monday at the Queensland Media Club

Just one day after Laura, I found myself in Brisbane having the privilege of attending a lunch forum at the Queensland Media Club in Brisbane for the YES Campaign.

I was invited by the Cape York Institute's Noel Pearson and accompanied by fellow Mayor Kerri Tamwoy from Aurukun Shire Council.

On the table was discussing the importance of recognising Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people in the Australian Constitution, as we sought support from the corporates, business community and the general public.

We gave the audience our first hand experiences of the challenges in our respective remote communities on Cape York, speaking about health, education, economic development opportunities, employment and more.

Our message was that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must have the opportunity to true self-determination so we can take control of our own destinies.

Past and current governments policies and investments are failing our people. We can no longer suffer failure and count continually destructive and sad statistics around our people. There is an urgent need for change.

We need to influence a better future for our people and Australia.

Our voices need to be heard.

Local Government Association of Queensland Indigenous Leaders Forum, Cairns

The Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) Indigenous Leaders Forum (ILF) comprises of representatives from the 17 Indigenous Shires in Queensland under our Local Government structure.

It is a unique model designed to cater for Indigenous Shires, Mayors, Councillors, CEOs and other staff members to discuss and work from a statewide perspective on our challenges.

Networking amongst our Indigenous communities elected representatives is important to build that united and coordinated approach and an action-oriented lobbying framework.

It also gives communities the opportunity to showcase their successes.

Sharing good news stories is important and helps to keep all of our communities focused on positive and achievable outcomes.

We were privileged to have Federal and State Government Ministers attend this year, because having these discussions directly with Ministers and Chiefs of Staff is an opportunity to refocus on our critical issues and challenges.



Attending the **ALGA Annual Conference in Canberra** is another exciting opportunity, meeting local government from different shires throughout the country and our fellow **Councillors**.

We all get to listen and learn from each other.

This year was extra special because our **Councillors** were invited into the **Parliament**

House for two important dinners: firstly with the **Speaker of the House**; and then with the **Prime Minister Anthony Albanese** and other members of the **Labor Government**.

Visiting **Canberra** also gives the **Council and Councillors** an opportunity to meet with **Federal Ministers** to raise and lobby for our regional and community agendas.



Midnight Oil singer welcome

Midnight Oil lead singer, the legendary **Peter Garrett** visited **Lockhart** and region with **Cape York** photographer **Kerry Trapnell** and former **CEO** of the **Australian Conservation Foundation** **Professor Don Henry**, to explore some ideas around possible **World Heritage Listing sites**.

They were starting with current **National Parks** and other sites proposed and/or agreed upon by **Traditional Owner groups** and keen to explore the right ways to raise their ideas, not only with us, but

how they should approach government.

They also wanted to raise awareness about **World Heritage Sites** and what value it would bring to **Community and People**.

They were important discussions that must have **Traditional Owner** input, and must taken into consideration their involvement, as well as accounting for the many different **Land Tenures**, organisations and interest groups.

When new ideas, or old propositions, such as these



arise, there needs to be in-depth and independent scrutiny to ensure all pros and cons are examined and highlighted to reflect our aspirations to protect, manage and maintain **Country, Culture and Language!**



Peter was happy to spend time meeting Traditional Owners, locals and visitors while visiting Lockhart River and region.





Queensland Government Regional Parliament Sittings in Cairns made history with the endorsement and passage of the Pathway to Treaty Bill last month!

The passing of the Bill brought jubilation throughout the chamber and public gallery, and I was lucky enough to be present to witness this historic occasion.

Indigenous Parliamentarians were applauded for their contribution and the Queensland Labor Government deserves recognition for their efforts to legislate such an important Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's focus.

While the Queensland Government and Ministers

were in Cairns it was a great opportunity for Mayors and Councillors, through the Torres Cape Indigenous Council Alliance (TCICA), to lobby particular Ministers on our agendas and getting Ministerial deputations where we were able to enjoy one-on-one discussions.

Wayne



ABOVE: Lockhart Ministerial Champion and Director General Warwick Agnew (Lockhart Government Champion) having a cuppa with the local sub contractors workforce in the bush



Former Community Council Chair and former Deputy Mayor, Cr Norman Bally



A word from ...

CEO

David Clarke



This year marks 40 years since Noella and I first came to Lockhart. I look back over the years thinking about how our town has grown from a quiet place of 350 people with dirt roads, water from the creek, no sewerage, no police, and no phones. No one, Pum'a or Paar'a, had anything and there were not many cars or boats.

The drive to Cairns was a two day effort, usually with break downs and flat tyres.

Old Site road was a proper bush bash.

They were simple times when our old fellas ruled even though the Manager's liked to think they did.

Things were pretty strict back then.

No kids walk around night time and everyone went to school. Our culture was very

strong and it told us what we could do and how we got on with each other.

The big challenge through those early days was the government people kept telling us what to do and making decisions for us.

The *Queensland Aborigines Act* was still in place so the Manager was all powerful and the State still held our land.

Our old fellas had to rule quietly and secretly.

We had a Council but it was only advisory with no real power. In 1984 the *Queensland Community Services Act* came in which, for the first time, gave our Council the power to make decisions for our people.

The first big battle had been won: the right to self determination. In 1987 we left, with our young son Jack,

to go to Thursday Island to help set up the Local Governments in the outer islands – to help them go from State rule to local rule.

We came back in 1994 with Jack and Callum (Chunchumu) to work with community on the second big challenge: getting our land back.

On the 29th of October 1987, Council became Trustee for all the land in our shire.

We still celebrate DOGIT Day as the first time our gang became the legal custodians of the land in our shire. It took a while but we finally got the land handed to the Traditional Owners under the Mangkuma Land Trust.

Our old leaders got together and decided the boundary of the township area with the rest being held by Mangkuma.



Dave and Noella's son Jack being Christened at Lockhart River church by Fr Ellison in 1986.





*Wayne Butcher,
Dave Clarke, Jim
Davis, Paul Piva,
and Norman Bally
in the 1990s*

There was no land council or state government involvement.

Our people put that boundary in and called the other mobs to recognise it once they had agreed on it. It was a unique act of leadership consensus and one that the current Land Council, and everyone else, need to respect.

In more recent times Native Title has also been finalised over the Mangkuma area as well.

The land battle had been won.

We left for Brisbane in 2001 where the kids finished their education.

We came back in 2014 to work with community on a range of things but the challenge this time was getting our local economy working for us. Not many people were in work and the business opportunities were all being taken by outside contractors.

We were sitting

watching them wondering how do we get access to the jobs for our kids and the business opportunities that would keep the money in our town.

Nine years later we see Council with triple the number of employees on staff, many successful business now providing services to Council and important tourism infrastructure being built that should open new doors to job opportunities for the next generation.

We now own our economy and only see outside contractors come in when we don't have the right skills or we are too busy delivering our projects.

We keep most project funds in town and provide a good chance for our kids.

Together, we have achieved much over these 40 years. It is not the same town it used to be.

We have won important victories but I see our society sliding backwards on some fronts.

I worry for our kids that don't go to school.

I worry for our old people who get pressured for their money by their grand children.

I see too much fighting.

I worry when I see countrymen selling grog and patcha for big money to our people and think it's okay.

I get sad when job opportunities created are not taken up.

It's time for us all to stand up against those who don't do the right thing.

Time to say, "sorry we don't put up with that in Lockhart".

I see some people scared to speak up but speak up we must.

Don't be scared to be part of the solution.

To help shape the future by standing up, joining in on decision making.

Working together we will make it shine.

Our future is in our hands.

Dave



Airport management in good hands



Anthony Ryan, otherwise known as ‘Scruffy’, spent 12 years working at Pormpuraaw airport before he came – the long way – to Lockhart River earlier this year.

“Had a look around New South Wales, Cobar, Western Australia,” he said.

“Made my way back to Queensland, worked in Aurukun for two years, and now I’m here in Lockhart River as Airport Manager.”

He said with the roads opening, things were starting to pick up.

“The roads are open, so we won’t have such a shortage

on fuel, and be able to look after the public a bit better,” he said.

“We’ve got diesel, Jet A for the bigger aircraft

and for the smaller aircraft we’ve got F Gas. People just need to come and find me in the office here.”



Noella to retire

“Thanks for all your hard work over the years making sense of things even the funding bodies couldn’t give life to,” CEO Dave Clarke says.



“There is a lot of thankless work behind the scenes giving our folks the best service we can provide and you have not missed a beat.

“Providing a sterling service to our town over a 40 year period, be it as a Nurse or leading our

HACC team, you have much to be proud of.

“You have built a wonderful team with great spirit and Natalie will inherit the fruits of your efforts.

“Enjoy your retirement, you have deserved it.”





Corporate Services

We welcome our new external auditors Crowe Australia appointed by QAO for the new audit term, Director Stanley Mugwiria writes...

We have had preliminary visit and interim audit completed on schedule by May 2023.

The final audit visit is planned for September 2023.

As usual the finance team is busy preparing for this annual audit and very focused on achieving good audit opinion from the auditors.

The finance team is looking forward to work and learn from the new audit professionals.

We thank the previous auditors Grant Thornton who through their professionalism, our finance reporting has improved significantly.

We wish them well in other professional audit undertakings.

My overseas trip in February

I was very fortunate to visit my family and relatives in Kenya in February.

While the trip was long and tiring, the excitement to reunite with mum, dad, brothers and sisters and the extended family was noticeable throughout the trip.

I felt refreshed and invigorated for the upcoming year-end processing and commencement of new 2023/24 financial year.

While I was away overseas, the finance team held extremely well and I wish to thank them for their support and teamwork.

The finance services continued



without any disruption in my absence and wish to congratulate them all for their commitment to delivery of services to the Lockhart River community.

I owe you team members.

Cairns office flooding – and a heroic response

We had very sad news during our Easter holiday whereby failed water supply pipe of water bubbler in the office flooded the entire office floor on a long weekend.

I wish to thank my heroes, Rose Hall and her partner (Brian) for their selfless effort as they were the first responders when the water leak was reported by the cleaners.

They quickly came to the office and turned off the water supply.

That made the difference in reducing the damages to other neighbouring offices as water had started seeping through to their floors and ceilings. The damage to the floor

carpet disrupted our services for a week but now a new carpet has been installed and all services back to normal.

The team in the office is resilient.



Noleen and Peter Garrett





Business Development & Support Officer Jermaine Thomas is keen to welcome people to the new Business Hub, which opened in April this year.

LRASC Councillor Norman Bally said he was particularly keen to see young people using the Hub.

“We’ve got lots of things happening down there, and I’d like to see young people utilising the building,” he said.

Jermaine said more people were becoming aware.

“We plan to put a large sign outside the front to increase community awareness, especially now we’re in this more central location, between the shop and the fuel pumps,” he said.

“People should know it’s for everybody and it’s free, including free internet, for anything business related.”

He said he had been working closely with Jenny from

Many Rivers.

“They’re good because they’ve got a business toolkit they provide for people who register with them,” he said.

“They also provide small loans of up to \$5,000 to help with things like insurance and equipment in the first instance”

He said they already had a success story.

“Gary Warradoo has started a mowing business, called Gary’s Mowing,” he said.

“He went through all the loans, insurance, getting an ABN number, business bank account, and he’s now got work from Queensland Housing.

“There’s a lot of vacant houses that people just can’t move into because the weeds

have just grown too high and that, and the job’s too big for Parks and Gardens, so there’s a need for him.

“He had work from his first day, and it’s good work.”

He said there was plenty of scope in the community for small businesses to develop and even privatisation.

“The Business Hub is a comfortable culturally appropriate office place for people to get support with their business,” he said.

“It’s a safe place to learn how to start, run and grow a business or to learn new skills, do workforce training, mentoring, coaching or networking.

“It’s flexible, self-paced, and it’s here, all set up and ready to go.”





Community Development

Our programs have been busy delivering services to Lockhart River Community Development Consultant Margie Barnes writes...

With the Laura Dance Festival and the preparations for the festival in Lockhart River later in the year staff have been working together with the dancers and community members with the collection of local resources, dyeing and preparing traditional costumes, and dance practices.

We welcomed Doug Williams as the new Justice Coordinator to the role.

Doug has commenced working with the Wulpumu Justice

Group to assist in building up and supporting the group.

Training in Peace Keeping and Mediation has been undertaken which will support the clients and families.

Increased funding from the Department of Justice and Attorney General has been successful for the next three years and gives the program a great opportunity to grow and develop a plan to meet the needs of Lockhart River.

Also to support the program and the Justice Group, the

Council and the department are working together to secure JP training to be delivered in Lockhart River in this financial year.

There is always a need for JP services, so to grow the pool is very important.

Some will already know Doug, as he is not a new face to Lockhart River, but if you have any needs or interest in the Justice programs, say 'hello' and do not hesitate to have a yarn with him.



Many will have seen the renovations works going on at the Women's Shelter over the recent months. These works have been long overdue and are very welcomed.

The extended rains following the wet season and other supply issues have impacted on the final completion but we cannot wait to see the finished product.

It has not been easy for the staff and clients to continue to operate around these renovations but I would like to thank them all for their

commitment, patience and understanding.

I am sure the staff will be looking forward to setting up again and holding an open day for the women and families once everything is completed.

On a personal note it was nearly 40 years ago that our family first arrived in Lockhart River.

Our second child was born while we were living in Lockhart, for nearly six years in the 1980s.

Although we have been fortunate enough to have lived and visited a number of times since then, our

family which now included our two grandsons recently had the pleasure of doing a trip to the Tip (including camping not glamping... LOL).

The first main stop was Lockhart River and it was the highlight for our grandchildren.

The place, people, beaches and fishing experience was number one.

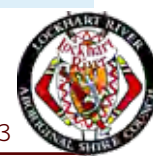
Another generation of our family experiencing this special place.

Thank you Lockhart River.

Margie



Margie's grandsons enjoyed a trip to the Tip and their stay in Lockhart River.





Bessie Hobson, Eleanor Short & Bella Hobson

HACC services team busy as ever

The services continue to be delivered to the community and we always keep a closer watch on our clients with the cooler months here.

“Things have been pretty busy,” HACC worker Bessie Hobson says.

“At the moment we’re doing 22 meals, but there are a few in Cairns who will be back soon.

“The accommodation always keeps us busy, even when the rivers are up, people fly in.

“So we have a good team at the moment and we are getting things done.”

Women’s Shelter looking forward to renos

The first part of this year has been very busy at the Women’s Shelter with lots of renovations happening there, Com Dev Consultant Margie Barnes says.

“It has not been easy working around these renovations but they will be great when finished,” she said. “We recently celebrated Women’s Day with a lunch and gathering at the Community Hall.

“It was good to see the Mums and families there.

“This was followed by an evening at the Social Club with dinner, celebrations and entertainment.

“It was an occasion for all to work together and for strong positive messages to be shared.”



Pictured left: Women’s Shelter worker Luka Getawan





Connecting with other Men's Groups

Men's Group Coordinator Rex Cannon has worked hard to make connections with other men's group on the Cape to give their activities a boost.

"It will be good for the men to get out and engage with others, to run a program or information session together," he said.

"Then we'd invite them over here to do the same thing.

"We're only a small community and only a certain number of men come every week, but if the men, say from Coen, came up, maybe that would encourage more men to be involved.

"I think it's a good idea."

He said there were activities such as furniture making and wood carving, welding and leather work.

"Normally we get a good gathering there from about 9 o'clock to midday, and every now and then we have a lunch up here," he said

"Lockhart River is a nice place and we're enjoying being here, the family and I."





Justice Group makes a difference

New Justice Coordinator Doug Williams hopes to have the Wulpumu Justice Group up and running again soon, with a good mix of young and old.

“It’s very important to have the Justice Group working properly,” he said.

“They make a big difference to the community, helping people with their court submissions and things like that.

“I’m here to help people with anything they need, letters they don’t understand and things like that, liquor licensing issues, mediation and peace keeping, domestic and family violence – that’s where we try to help the victims and rehabilitate the offenders.

“It’s important work and there’s a lot of it, unfortunately.”

Doug has been a public servant for 45 years, the last 30 of those based in the court house at Winton.

“I was a Clerk at the court, and the Queensland government agency manager, so a lot of odd jobs where they were needed – even in transport and



housing – and most state government functions.”

He said the two towns – Lockhart River and Winton – had a lot to offer, but not much in common.

“It’s good here,” he said.

“There’s not much difference in size between the two towns, but tourism is a big thing in Winton these days.

“In Winton there’s only 800 people but there’s four pubs, and a golf club, two corner shops, a butcher shop and a bakery.

“Cafes are also a thing that are springing up, there are four or five cafes there for all the tourists.

“But it’s on that main road to Darwin, so you get a lot

of traffic going through.”

He said if you hadn’t yet met him to come and say hello.

“If you have any problem or need any help, come and see me,” he said.

“Myself or Danielle Hudson, who is our Women’s Domestic and Family Violence Support Worker, are happy to help.

“We’ve also got a vacant position for a Men’s Worker, which is very, very hard to fill.

“Our aim is to try to work with all parties, to try and improve things.

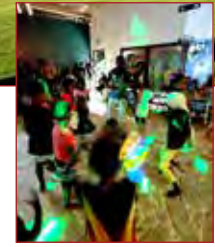
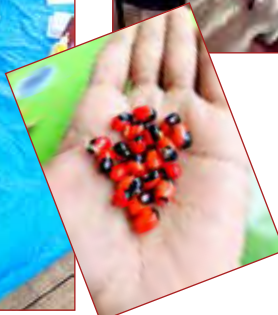
“We need to reinforce that violence is not a way of life, not the way to go and we can stop it.”





Youth programs for June/July school holidays included:

- canvas painting
- culture programs (Laura Festival prep) with gathering and making dance costumes.
- collecting bush beads and shells for necklace making
- dying red dye dance skirts strips for dance skirts
- touch footy and sausage sizzle with Liz from CYE
- softball match on footy oval
- disco partnership with Rex and the police and kids club group first time held at the social club on Mondays.





Building Services

We are on track to reach our targets for the end of this financial year, Building Services Manager Regis Edmond writes...

We've had a lot of upgrade work that will be completed, and we're at 80 per cent for our carport upgrades program.

Our upgrade renovations program for most of the houses was also on target to be completed before the financial year.

Most of our work now is our maintenance programme, which is well under control.

A lot of maintenance has been completed and we want the community to report to housing if there are any maintenance issues – don't wait for it to be too late and something is broken or worse.

QBuild is going to run a painting program and I'm trying to get a fencing repairs program for next financial year to create more work in the community.

A lot of our tenants want to keep their dogs inside their yard or stop horses from coming in, so if you have any fencing around your property that's broken, you can report them to housing as well.

I'm very happy to say



Brandon Accoom, Regis Edmond and Luke Bowler

the airport fencing is now completed.

Council has also to construct some staff housing and we are hoping that will come through sometime soon.

The new subdivision most likely going to be started fairly soon as well, and that will create a lot more work for building services.

We need to sort out some young apprentices to join the building team so if there are any young men or women out there interested in building, they can always put an expression of interest to the council.

It's a great opportunity because all these houses are going to be built in Lockhart for Lockhart, and

as much as possible by Lockhart's own people.

Other work we are moving to get done are the dance grounds down at the beach and the camping ground.

Thanks to all our local tradesmen, apprentices, labourers and support staff, we've been getting what we need to do, let's keep this up.

And as always, many thanks to the Council for the support they are giving my team, we have to get the work done together, and now that the rivers are down we are able to get contractors in to help us complete these works as well.

Regis





Cornelius Durilla (Cowboy) & Joaquin Accoom

If you have any questions about how to ship with Sea Swift – cars or other freight – see Benedict, Noella or Carlson at the Council Store – Lockhart River’s own Cairns Hardware! – for more information or a pick-up form.





Engineering Services

Roads Inspector John Mansbridge is keen and contracted to get some systems in place for Computer-Aided Design (CAD), or machine controlled works for the Lockhart River road crews.

“Basically the jobs can come in and then they can plug them into the machine so they can see what the job is, so that’s how it works,” he said.

“And it’s the norm, it’s not something new, it’s like everywhere south of here.

“It shows exactly where the machine is and where the design is, so instead of going and pegging out pegs that

get run over all day long, someone can see the machine what they’ve got to do without them.

“So I’m trying to get that in place, even though the majority of work here is REPA, or Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets, work which is where most of the people will be employed here. “Work between here and the PDR is ongoing, and most of it is annually after rain or flood events.

“And anyone can drive around the community and see a lot of the roads have got some pretty serious potholes in them, and divets, rivets, rivulets, rivers –

general destruction.”

He said he was here for the year, working with former-Environmental Health Officer Morgan Hobson, who he hoped would take over the role.

“You need leadership, but you’ve got to have soldiers as well,” he said.

“People have got to want to do it, there’s opportunities here for everybody and there’s a lot of money involved in this sort of work.

“It’s a bit hard to explain if you don’t know what it’s all about, but there’s many millions of dollars in these projects, and there are more to come this year.”



Work available with the Road Gang



Work on the new campgrounds is nearly finished, Road Gang Supervisor Solly Hobson says.

“We’re trying to finish it before we head out to the main highway, there’s a heap

to do again on the road,” he said.

“A bit more bitumen, a few more cow grids to go in, culvert work and lots of grading with some good gravel from the Archer quarry.”

He said there was work there

for those who wanted it.

“We’ve got three on at the moment, down one because of illness, and we’ll be looking to bring on some more people.

“There will be long hours and a bit of extra cash for those who want it.”

Local cars still off the workshop menu

Workshop Supervisor Anthony Macri has been out of action for several months with a broken hand, but says he’s been happy to leave things in the hands of his crew.

They are Bradley, Pomie, Richard, Dion, Kaleen, Tony and Napo.

“It’s a bigger crew than last year but we still can’t take any local cars at the moment,” he said.

“The road gang is picking up, and they’re

our main concern, and there’s already a lot to catch up on with me being out of action, probably for a few more months yet.”





Municipal Services



Youth voices heard thanks to Heywire/FRRR grant



The Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR) offered grants of up to \$10,000 for projects that addressed issues that matter to young people across remote, rural and regional Australia.

The ideas designed to inspire these projects were developed as part of the ABC Heywire Youth Summit.

Jordan from Lockhart River, land of the Kaanju, Wuthathi, Kuuku Yau, Kanthanumpu, Uutaalnganu and Umpila people, was one of several Queensland winners this year.

Jordan was part of the group of young people who developed the “Hear Our Voices” idea, which asks rural communities, “How might we ensure that all youth voices are heard and represented on issues that matter to them?”

The photo shows Jordan and fellow Hear Our Voices group participant, Harry, with thanks to photographer Bradley Cummings.

The FRRR ABC Heywire Youth Innovation Grants program has supported remote, rural, and regional



youth since 2013, providing them with the opportunity to not only identify the issues that matter most to them but also take action to combat them.

This was the 11th year of the partnership between FRRR and the ABC to run the Heywire Youth Innovation Grants.

“We’re proud to once again partner with FRRR to invest in youth ideas across remote, rural and regional Australia,” said Warwick Tiernan, ABC Director, Regional and Local. “We know that young people are keenly aware of the issues that affect them

and given the chance, they have the skills to develop solutions to them.

“Being able to back these ideas with grants to make them come to reality shows young people we are doing more than just listening, we are acting on them.

“We’re excited to see what pioneering projects come to life this year and share these stories through the ABC network.”

For more information about the next round of grants see <https://frrr.org.au/funding/people/heywire-youth-innovation-grants/>





Immunisations still top the health to-do list

A focus for the clinic over the past month has been finding grade 10 kids who haven't been immunised for meningococcal disease, Lockhart River Health Clinic Director of Nursing Josh Stafford says.

"The immunisation we offer for people in grade 10 is for something called meningococcal disease," he said. "People might have heard a few years ago there was a couple of deaths in the Northern Territory of people with meningococcal, so this immunisation will protect our kids against that, so you might see people out in the community looking for these grade 10 kids."

He said flu and COVID shots were also on their agenda.

"If you haven't already had a flu shot, it's definitely time," he said.

"We always encourage people to get flu shots."

He said they were also keen to catch those who hadn't had their fifth COVID vaccination.

"If you want to have a COVID number five,



come on in," he said.

"It's got to be six months since your last one, and we're at the stage now where our immunisation rates are excellent.

"COVID is now something in the same vein as the flu – if you've got COVID, you stay at home until you're well and then you go back and go about your business, just as you would if you've got the flu."

He said he and his staff were working hard to look after the community.

"The clinic is staffed by two

nurses on the weekends," he said. "We don't have a full compliment of staff, but if people have something wrong – not routine things – there are nurses in the clinic, as there are after hours.

"We need to remember that in the big cities you've got a whole hospital full of people who are able to see people, and they can go home and they're on day shift, afternoon shift or night shift.

"But here in the communities, you've got one nurse who works all day until 5pm and then takes the phone home.



“We’ve got great staff here at the moment, we are very lucky.

“We’ve got Ollie Hauser, who most people know, Vicky Watkin, who has come back to the clinic after being away for a while and everyone knows Sheri, with an S, who’s here in the clinic.

“So we’ve got three, four including me, permanent staff members, permanent nurses in the clinic who the community knows, so we’re

quite happy about that.”

He said they were all coming to terms with the loss of much-valued groundsman Corey Beard.

“Myself and the rest of the team want to pass on our heartfelt condolences with his passing,” he said.

“Corey was a groundsman here at the Lockhart River Clinic on and off for about seven years, and just left about a year ago to enjoy his retirement with Mary Jane and Tanya and

the rest of his grandkids.

“Everyone here at the clinic was devastated with what happened and our hearts go out to the family.

“We have taken delivery of our new ride-on mower and we have a little license plate made up with a little plaque, and we have let the family know we have done that.

“He was a good man and a bloody good worker, and he will be sorely missed.”





Social Club keeps growing







Lockhart River Families

