

Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation News - April 2019

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From the CEO's desk

"What a privilege it is to live in this incredible untouched part of Australia, probably one of Australia's best kept secrets.

"It is also an honour to be the CEO of one of Australia's oldest and largest Aboriginal Corporations, situated in the NT's largest remote community.

"The complexities of running a multi-business corporation are challenging, however adding to that the remote and cultural context, makes the challenge immense.

"We are at the mercy of so many other organisations for basic survival needs, including weekly deliveries of food, essential living supplies and industrial supplies through to health services.

"So to succeed in keeping our diverse range of business and social enterprises running smoothly as we take strides toward employment opportunities and greater financial independence for our community is quite remarkable.

"We hope that by sharing some of our highs and lows, achievements and challenges through our newly established newsletter, you too will understand the extraordinary environment in which we live and work. I hope we can give you some insights and we may even garner some support for what we do."



Record Vege Sales

Records tumbled this week as BAC's Barlmarrk supermarket sold 236 kg of fresh fruit and vegetables in one day. The supermarket aims to sell 1000 kg of fresh fruit and vegetable per week. Its strategy is making the 'good stuff' cheaper and more accessible than less nutritious food. Its year-to-date figures show a 200 per cent increase in fruit and veg sales compared to last year.



Safe proud people connected to country through song lines

Maningrida gets set for a massive tourism season

Bawinanga's staff and locals role played tourists and guides asking and answering questions to prepare for this year's hectic tourism season.

The Babbarra Women's Centre op shop donated wide brimmed hats and colourful outfits to those dressing up as tourists, while guides, for whom English is just one of about five languages they have learned to understand and speak, handled a barrage of questions.

Their practice paid off as about 60 Coral Expedition passengers were welcomed ashore to Maningrida on Easter Monday; the first of many tour groups that will explore the remote Arnhemland community this Dry Season.

In a good year, a tour group arrives every second day between April and mid September, with up to 100 people stepping off the barge landing.

"It's quite amazing what people ask locals; sometimes it can be quite confronting," Michelle said.

"We do the role play so when the visitors come, the guides are confident and ready for just about any sort of question.

"There's also been working bees and spring cleaning, and we've just finished the Djómi Museum renovations."

The visitor's itinerary includes visits to Babbarra Women's Centre and its retail outlet, the nationally significant Maningrida Arts and Cultural Centre, the Djómi Museum, a guided fishing expedition and weaving workshops.



Tough new tucker trucks

Two camouflaged, six-wheel drive Land Rovers will soon be delivering groceries to around 28 homelands surrounding Maningrida.

The Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation supermarket operates the Tucker Run which carries supplies to outstations during the dry season.

The 'tucker run' takes three days each week to do its rounds and the often rough, corrugated dirt roads are tough on tucker trucks.

Local freight company, Territory Transport, delivered the vehicles to Darwin from Melbourne.



The sturdy Land Rovers, which were constructed in Australia for the military, will be registered and refitted with shelving and storage compartments for their new life purpose in Maningrida.

Safe proud people connected to country through song lines

International award throws spotlight on Maningrida

The work of Maningrida's internationally acclaimed artist, John Mawurndjul, attracted the limelight at the 2019 MuseWeb conference in Boston recently.

MuseWeb was founded in Los Angeles in 1997 when museums started to explore the Internet as a new way to engage audiences and participants.

Museums from around the world submit their best digital projects each year in the hope of winning a GLAMi Award, which recognises the most innovative projects in the cultural heritage sector.

The year the GLAMi went to the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA)

in Sydney, for its website john-mawurndjul.com.

The website was developed with John Mawurndjul as a two-year project to support the MCA's major retrospective exhibition *John Mawurndjul: I am the old and the new*.

John Mawurndjul is a Kuninjku master bark painter and is celebrated for his mastery of rarrk (fine-painted cross-hatching), a tradition shared by generations of Kuninjku artists.

The MCA's exhibition of bark paintings and sculptures told the stories of Kuninjku culture and the significant locations surrounding the artist's home in Western Arnhem Land.

Jean-Pierre Chabrol, Head of Digital Media at MCA, said the website is a milestone of deep consultation over two years between the artist, his community and the Museum.

The site's design was interconnected with the development of the exhibition and 400-page catalogue, in association with the Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation's enterprise, Maningrida Arts & Culture.

"This year's GLAMi awards attracted 16 submissions, which were narrowed to three finalists, and john-mawurndjul.com won.

"This is a significant industry award and it's a celebration of relationship the MCA has with John Mawurndjul and Maningrida Arts & Culture. "



Matthan Turnquest, Keith Munro, Jean-Pierre Chabrol, Murray Garde, John Mawurndjul, Kudjidi, 2017.
Photograph: Nici Cumpston

Safe proud people connected to country through song lines

Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation operates Maningrida Wild Foods, which has a small fishing crew who daily catch fish by hand-held nets.

They also recently started to fillet fish in their own processing facility. Species include Ngayeméla (the Maningrida mullet, a local favourite), Mabbardóbbarda (Blue salmon), Nmárdba (Giant queenfish) and Nganakarlóla (Golden trevally).

They sell fish locally and to Darwin Fish Markets.

The fishing crew is now proudly selling our bibbo (mud crabs in Ndjebbana language) outside of Maningrida.

Bibbo is an essential bush food for our saltwater people. They are thrilled to harvest it themselves on their own sea country and now, with their first shipment going outside Maningrida this week, share it with the rest of the country.



Bibbo's On the Menu

Bawinanga Rangers welcome new manager, Duncan Whitchurch

The Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation this week welcomed former military staffer, Duncan Whitchurch, to the Bawinanga Ranger management role. Duncan brings extensive project and program management experience to the pioneering ranger team, which manages the land and sea environment in the Djelk Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) in West Arnhemland.

His career path to Maningrida has been an interesting journey with time spent working in mining, commercial fishing, custodial corrections and the military through regional Queensland, Western Australia, Mornington Island and Nhulunbuy.

He has also engaged in community development and mental health and wellbeing initiatives in the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.

Duncan will lead the Ranger Program's activities across the traditional estates of more than 100 individual clan groups that surround Maningrida and 30 family-based outstation communities.

The award-winning ranger program has cared for the land and sea environment for more than 20 years and has been recognised for its innovative approaches to applying traditional knowledge to modern land management challenges.

Despite the Aboriginal areas' biodiverse and environmentally intact landscapes, the Rangers manage a range of escalating environmental challenges, including changing fire regimes, the decline in native animals species and the spread of invasive weeds and feral animals.



Safe proud people connected to country through song lines

Governance leads First Peoples conference agenda

The Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation Board recently travelled to Melbourne to attend the 2019 ANZSOG conference Reimagining Public Administration: First Peoples, governance and new paradigms.

The conference attracted more than 400 delegates from around Australia and New Zealand.

The keynote speaker was Adam Goodes. Adam was named Australia in of the Year in 2014, in recognition of his community work and advocacy in the fight against racism, empowering the next generation of Indigenous Australians.

The conference themes were reimagining leadership, relationships, service systems and knowledge systems.



CEO Ingrid Stonhill said the conference was an excellent opportunity for BAC Board Members to gain perspective and understand that there are many other first peoples out there trying to achieve remarkable things.

“It’s easy for board members to get overwhelmed by decision-making and not necessarily understand the importance of the overarching governance structure and how important it is to demonstrate consultative importance of the overarching governance structure and how important it is to demonstrate consultative, transparent local decision-making processes,” Ms Stonhill said.

“It was a rare opportunity for them to meet others from similar situations and backgrounds and hear new perspectives.”



Did you know Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation now has its own Facebook page? Find us at <https://www.facebook.com/WestArnhemland>

BAC Chairman Dion Cooper, CEO Ingrid Stonhill and Arts and Culture GM Michelle Culpitt had the opportunity to showcase the five year progress of the community lead additions to the highly regarded Maningrida Art Centre.

Captured in the Office of the Chief Minister’s Cabinet Room is Dion Cooper presenting Chief Minister Michael Gunner with a book of works by world famous Maningrida Artist Balang John Mawurndjul.

The BAC team also briefed the Minister for Police, Nicole Manison, Minister for Tourism and Culture, Lauren Moss and Member for Arafura, Lawrence Costa about their plans to expand the Arts and Cultural precinct development into a world-class facility that could become a significant tourism attraction in Arnhem Land.

