

## Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation

## Community Newsletter

## CEO Christmas Message for the Community

What a year!  
 "Unprecedented"  
 "Lockdown" "Pandemic"...

At the start of the year, these would have been words that we used rarely, if ever. But our communities have fared remarkably well.

The far west of NSW responded quickly to COVID19 and I was heartened to see that Maari Ma's clients and staff adapted to each of the changes required of us. But they weren't easy: not being able to see our elders face to face, not being able to gather with family for important occasions, not being able to travel across borders to see family and friends, and changes to how we deliver and access our services and programs.

But with Aboriginal people deemed to be an at-risk population, it was important we do as much as possible to keep everyone safe. And now it seems we can hopefully look forward to a vaccine in 2021 which may become an important part of our vaccination calendar.

COVID19 hasn't stopped us all making efforts to keep ourselves well, staying as healthy as we can, both



physically and emotionally. It is easy to become isolated when you can't greet friends the way you normally would or only see people on a computer or phone screen. It's important to reach out if you are feeling down: to a friend or family member or one of the Maari Ma team. It's just as important to consider friends you may not have seen or heard from recently, particularly as Christmas draws closer, as this can often be a difficult time. Many people may also feel anxious about gatherings of any type this Christmas: we just need to keep in mind the important rules to stay 1.5 metres apart, stay home if you feel unwell, and hand and sneeze hygiene.

What a year indeed: here's hoping 2021 is full of hope and good health. Have a very Merry Christmas.

*Bob Davis*



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### Maari Ma Primary Health Care Service

"Improving Aboriginal health and closing the gap"  
 Broken Hill, NSW



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# STATE OF ORIGIN *Winners*

Congratulations to the Deadly Blues State of Origin competition winners **Kylera Kerwin** and her mum **Chantal** from Wilcannia and **Josephine Johnson** from Broken Hill.



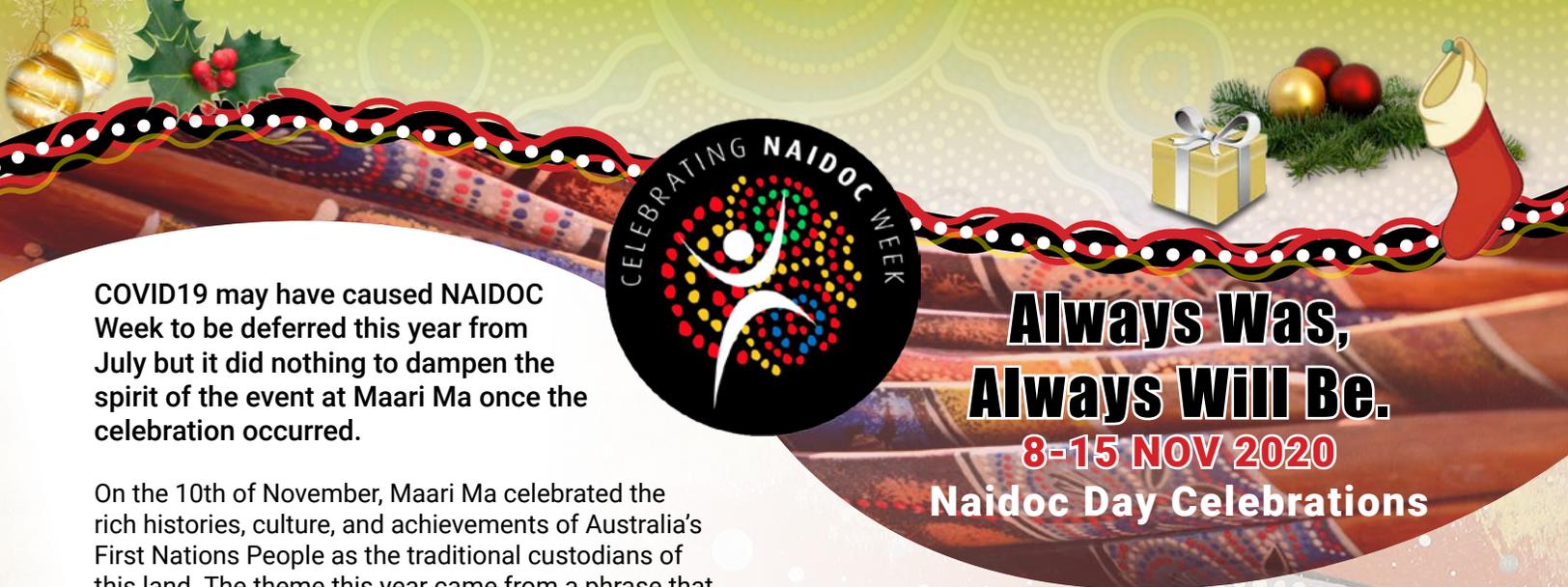


# CONGRATULATIONS

# 2020 HIPPY GRADUATES

In mid November the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) held a graduation dinner for the class of 2020 at the West footy club. The Early Years team would like to wish all children the very best for their future in "BIG" school.





COVID19 may have caused NAIDOC Week to be deferred this year from July but it did nothing to dampen the spirit of the event at Maari Ma once the celebration occurred.

# Always Was, Always Will Be.

8-15 NOV 2020

**Naidoc Day Celebrations**

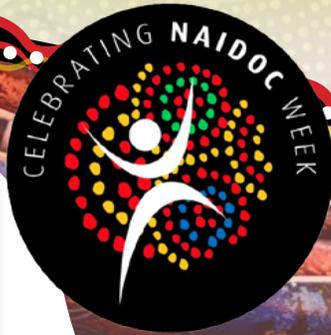
On the 10th of November, Maari Ma celebrated the rich histories, culture, and achievements of Australia's First Nations People as the traditional custodians of this land. The theme this year came from a phrase that was borne from the Aboriginal land rights movements in Australia - 'Always Was, Always Will Be' - a recognition that we have occupied and cared for this continent for more than 65,000 years, that we are spiritually and culturally connected to this country and we always will be.

A NAIDOC BBQ was held at the Kiila Laana building and saw more than 70 community members attend to have lunch and enjoy the stalls. There were plenty of giveaways on the day such as balloons, toothbrushes, water bottles, pencils, hats, bags, bubbles, and wristbands. There was a colouring in competition with three \$50 Target gift cards for the winners and there was also a draw for anyone who signed up for a health check.

One of the Naidoc Week colouring in competition winners: **AVA WEATHERSBEE.** Other winners were **Ella Lee and Ava Cunico.**







**Always Was,  
Always Will Be.**

**8-15 NOV 2020**

**Naidoc Day Celebrations**

*Balranald*



**Emma More** and SEWB worker **Danielle** in NAIDOC shirts.

Balranald celebrated with a pool party and pizza. Over 116 community members attended with the highlight being specially made balls that had words from the Nari Nari language.



**Ava Moore** with her Nari Nari language ball-donated by **Brendan Kennedy** for the pool party. He donated about 20 balls and the Balranald team are excited to work with him in future to support reinstating Aboriginal language within our region.



**Leo & James Moore** playing with a Nari Nari language ball at the pool party.

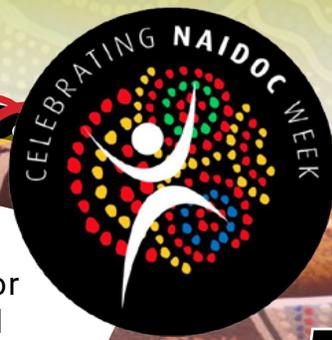


**Nadarlia Harradine.**



SEWB worker **Danielle** & her husband **Dave Reidy** helping hand out pizza (COVID safe of course).





The Kiila Laana team was at Broken Hill High School on Friday 13th November for the BHHS NAIDOC event which was held between 10.00 am to 2.30 pm.

The Youth Health team – **Louise Holland** and **Tarissa Staker** were at the school providing information and NAIDOC activities such as badge making, face painting, tie-dyeing bandanas and a NAIDOC themed canvas painting.

**Tiffany Lynch** and **Sharon Hooker** from the Kiila Laana program took the opportunity to provide information and visual tools on chemicals found in cigarettes, and also provided a blank whiteboard for the students to write messages or phrases about their thoughts on tobacco smoking. The information gathered will then be used by AACES – Aboriginal Arts, Community, Education Sistas who will work on pamphlets targeted at youth. The day was a huge success with many students wanting to discuss tobacco smoking and the effects it has on health, and children were quite taken aback to see the number of chemicals that go into cigarettes.

# Always Was, Always Will Be.

8-15 NOV 2020

Naidoc Day Celebrations

*Broken Hill High School*

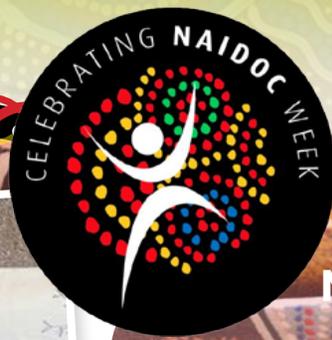


**Deyonne Reiss** is a talented student from the BHHS support class and had completed the calico art work for NAIDOC Day on her own from start to finish. Maari Ma's youth group are looking forward to having the painting framed.



Above is a painting by one of the AACES students **Monteanna Cattermole**. The painting will be framed and hung in the youth room.





# Naidoc Day Celebrations Broken Hill High School



It was a good day, the school held a BBQ with kangaroo rissoles and burgers, regular burgers and lots of cupcakes for lunch.



BHHS AEO'S teachers **Vicki Adams, Colleen Probert** and **Antoinette Deacon** (support teacher), also run the AACES group. Their dedication and support to students and organising the NAIDOC day event is enormous and greatly appreciated. The AACES students also assisted with helping this happen as well as the Clontarf guys **Ayden** and **Ben** and the supporting teachers who supervised and assisted throughout the day.





# Murdi Paaki Services Ltd

(an initiative of Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly)

## Tenant Support and Education Programme Overview

Murdi Paaki Services Ltd with funding through the Regional Aboriginal Housing Leadership Assembly offer our Tenant Support and Education Programme within the communities of:

- Bourke
- Enngonia
- Goodooga
- Walgett
- Collarenebri
- Cobar
- Brewarrina
- Weilmoringle
- Coonamble
- Gulargambone
- Ivanhoe
- Dareton/Wentworth
- Broken Hill
- Menindee
- Wilcannia
- Lightning Ridge

The programme involves five initiatives designed to support Aboriginal housing tenants to strengthen and sustain their tenancies through the provision of community education, service collaboration, community engagement and one on one tenant assistance. The five initiatives are:

### One: Quarterly Newsletter

Purpose - Create awareness of programme events and support services available to tenants.

### Two: Community Events

Purpose - A fun family event that engages Aboriginal housing tenants and community with service providers. Attendance is open to the whole community.

### Three: Tenant Support Referral Service

Purpose - One on one support for all aboriginal tenants to provide links for assistance with the aim of strengthening and sustaining their tenancies via our referral service.

### Four: Housing Application Support

Purpose - Assist and support the Aboriginal community members within the Murdi Paaki Region to apply for Aboriginal and or Social Housing through the Housing Pathways application process.

### Five: Murdi Paaki Housing and Environmental Health Plans

Purpose - Assist each community within the Murdi Paaki Region in the establishment of their Housing and Environmental Health Plans.

### Contact Information

**Andrew Smith-** 0428 117 373  
Project Manager andrew.smith@mpra.com.au

**Broken Hill and Menindee**

**Jodi Nagy-** 0438 362 817  
Project Officer jodi.nagy@mpra.com.au

**Lightning Ridge, Goodooga, Walgett and Collarenebri**

**Catherine Cubby-** 0428 007 743  
Project Officer catherine.cubby@mpra.com.au

**Bourke, Enngonia, Cobar and Wilcannia**

**Isabel Orcher-** 0428 505 993  
Project Officer isabel.orcher@mpra.com.au

**Ivanhoe, Brewarrina, Weilmoringle, Coonamble and Gulargambone**

**Rarnie Spencer-** 0447 230 075  
Project Officer RSpencer@malleefamilycare.com.au

**Dareton/Wentworth**

96 Marshall Street Cobar NSW 2835  
PO Box 48 Cobar NSW 2835  
ABN: 55 614 474 118



# MAARI MA *Welcome!*

## ALLIED HEALTH TRAINEES

### Telicia Briar and Stephanie Newman.

Telicia has completed her year 12 studies this year and Stephanie has been working as a HIPPY tutor in the Early Years program for the past 2 years. Together they will commence their TAFE Allied Health Assistant course in 2021.



### Kylie Mitchell

Kylie Mitchell has been welcomed to the Balranald team as Practice Admin Assistant.

Kylie is a proud Barkindji woman, originally from the Dareton/ Coomealla area. Kylie has previously worked in case management at Mallee Family Care, and with Ability Links at Broken Hill Aboriginal Lands Council. Kylie says that she is passionate and community driven and looks forward to this new opportunity at Maari Ma Health.

## *Farewell...*

### Peter Gough

Psychologist Peter Gough was farewelled on Friday 27th with morning tea. Peter has returned home to Echuca.



## Warning to tobacco smokers about “Chop Chop”



Dish 1, 2, & 3: has mould in illegal tobacco. Dish 4: legal tobacco with no mould at all.



Chop chop shown here which includes the stalk of the tobacco plant that look like half moon wood chips, grass cuttings and other ingredients to bulk up the tobacco to increase profit.

In recent months the Kiila Laana team has become very concerned about the growth in the number of tobacco smokers across the Far West Region using “Chop Chop” or black market tobacco. Whilst it may be cheaper than the regularly increasing cost of licensed manufactured tobacco products, Chop Chop is NOT a better choice for health.

Chop Chop may be purchased as loose tobacco or in pre-rolled cigarettes but there is no quality control testing. As a result the Chop Chop cigarettes/tobacco may contain a number of other products mixed with tobacco for bulking purposes: stalks of the tobacco, cabbage leaves and grass stalks, raw cotton and even bird feathers have been found.

Often Chop Chop is not dried properly and becomes mouldy and this can pose very serious fast acting added risks to a tobacco smokers’ health. If mould or fungal spores are inhaled into the lungs it can result in a wide range of health problems: skin conditions, allergic reactions, asthma, chronic bronchitis, lung, liver and kidney disease. These symptoms can develop more quickly than the chronic disease symptoms of a smoker using legal tobacco and could be life threatening.

For further information contact the Kiila Laana team on 8082 9777 or speak to your local health worker.

## 2021 is your year to BLOW THE SMOKES AWAY

Associate Professor **Renee Bittoun** is an internationally recognised expert in smoking cessation who partners with the Kiila Laana program to promote and educate patients, health workers, and the wider community on the latest research and best practice around tobacco smoking.

Back in February Renee attended the Kiila Laana rebranding launch, and offered a community education session that welcomed questions around managing tobacco smoking. The local media outlets also took advantage of Renee’s visit with interviews aired on all local radio stations.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, Renee was unable to personally attend specialist consultations and Maari Ma’s scheduled quarterly staff education sessions but telehealth was quickly adapted which has worked well.

The focus of tobacco smoking turned to the health impacts linked to COVID-19 highlighting a concern around smokers being more at risk of acute COVID symptoms if infected by the virus.

For over 30 years Professor Renee Bittoun has worked with people struggling to manage tobacco smoking and ultimately stopping for good.



**2021 is your year to “blow the smokes away!” Renee can provide you with expert support: simply contact a Maari Ma health worker and join the Kiila Laana program.**



# Dental Team

The Kids Dental team has been out and about recently – they’ve been to Menindee and Ivanhoe. Dental Therapist, **Meg Hurst** provided this overview.

*Maggie the dental team’s favourite dragon was there to help the kids practice their brushing techniques, as she was in Ivanhoe!!*

*The dental team spent 3 days in Ivanhoe seeing all the kids for their dental needs.*

*Ivanhoe was the first dental trip for the team’s trainee Dental Assistant, **Jayde Flentjar** and in her words... “Loved every minute of it!!”*

*Menindee Year 2 kids, **Xander, Melaia, Levi, Isileli and Noah** with their dental goodie bags after visiting the Maari Ma dental team. The kids had a dental check and fluoride varnish applied.*

*Looking at their happy smiles the kids had a great time!!!*



# Kalypi Paaka Mirika

Ngaayi everyone, what a year it has been for our communities, our Kalypi Paaka Mirika Healing Program and Maari Ma.

The year began positively for our team here at Kalypi Paaka Mirika, which is responsible for the delivery of our tailored healing program, developed in our region, to deal with issues specific to our region in the far west, and to address the impacts of colonisation, grief, loss and trauma.

The recruitment of **Max Quayle**, to be part of the team to help deliver the men section of the healing program was a great step forward for the program. Max is a great asset to our team and Maari Ma, and made up the 6th member of our team, with **Marsha Files** as the head of our team as Manager, **Kate Balman** as our Team Leader, **Alinta Edge** as our Senior female Project Officer, **Tessa Files** as the female project support worker, **Murray Butcher** as Senior male Project Officer and Max Quayle taking on role as the male project support worker.

These six made up the Kalypi Paaka Mirika Healing team, with all sharing equal responsibility and delivery of the program. With Marsha Files departure in July 2020, this left our team down to five. Marshas' dedication to the program over many years since inception, was instrumental in the smooth management of the team, ensuring we were on track with our service delivery to our communities and is sorely missed by all in our team.

February of 2020 saw the year picking up normally with our team rolling out the delivery of both men and women healing programs in Broken Hill and Menindee, with plans to engage in Wilcannia of the same month to have programs delivered to possible interested men and women in that community, but due to the sudden threat and spread of Covid-19 into our communities, Maari Ma made a decisive move to



stop all engagements with community and program delivery, to help keep our communities safe and avoid the spread of Covid-19 into our communities.

With this crucial decision made by Maari Ma, we have had to change our focus, and postpone all engagements and delivery of programs to our communities, until our Country could ensure the safety and well-being of its citizens.

During this period, our positions within Maari Ma were varied to help out in other areas within the organisation, such as transport of clients for appointments, ensuring clients make appointments, helping out in the flu clinic, restocking of doctors trays, counting stock, helping in administration and various other jobs. This variation of our duties enabled us to remain employed during this trying period. We were thankful that Maari Ma was flexible and allowed us to vary our duties and remain employed during the COVID difficulties.

In August of 2020, our team got the green light to be able to deliver programs again with limited participant numbers, and we were quick to take advantage of the situation, re-engaging with men and women in Broken Hill and Menindee from August to November, and delivering a number of programs in both communities. We look forward to reaching out to Wilcannia in the new year to deliver this much needed program to interested community members wanting to address issues in relation to grief, loss and trauma.



# Merry Christmas

## from Maari Ma

On Friday 27th November Maari Ma's annual staff meeting was held at the Silver City Cinema.

**Alinta Edge** welcomed everyone to country and Board Chairperson **Maureen O'Donnell**

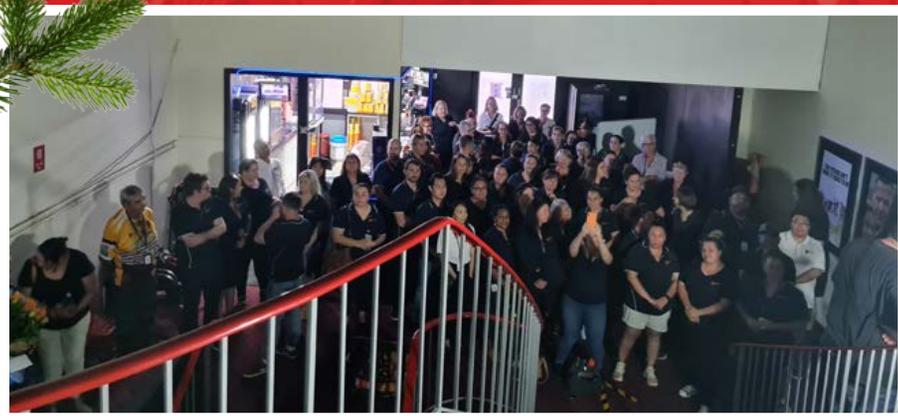
thanked everyone for their hard work this year, and wished all staff a merry and safe Christmas from the Board.

Guest speaker **Robert Tickner** (ex-politician and Government Minister) talked passionately about a broad spectrum justice reform initiative he is working on, *Jailing Is Failing*, which is looking to address the unacceptable Aboriginal incarceration rates in Australia. His message was that a denial of human rights (the basics of health, education housing) leads to these high rates of Aboriginal people in custody and he is calling for people across the political spectrum to work to address this issue.

[www.justicereforminitiative.org.au](http://www.justicereforminitiative.org.au)



A Reminder that Maari Ma will close from 5pm Wednesday 23rd December and open 9am Monday 4th January.



From all of the Maari Ma organisation we wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a joyous New Year.

### GP Review

During the year you should see your doctor to see if your GPMP or medication needs to be changed. You may also need some tests.

### START:

Your cycle of care starts with a twelve monthly GTG/IPIP sign up. This includes an ATSI Health Check and a follow-up by a health worker.

# MAARI MA Cycle of Care

### Follow-up care

Our health workers will visit you to talk about your health and see how you are going with your medications.

You should see your doctor regularly and develop a care plan to manage your health. This plan is called a GPMP.

### GPMP & Medication

You will be looked after by our Keeping Well team and other specialists like our dieticians, podiatrists and eye specialists. The Keeping Well team and pharmacist will help you with your medications which could include a Home Medication Review and a Webster Pack.

## Maari Ma Primary Health Care Service

*Improving Aboriginal Health & Closing the Gap...*

### About MMPHCS

Maari Ma Primary Health Care Service aims to provide culturally appropriate health services to Aboriginal people living in Broken Hill and surrounding communities.

We are governed by an all Aboriginal Board of Directors, who are deeply committed to providing an holistic approach to Aboriginal health that includes physical, emotional, spiritual, cultural and environmental dimensions.

Our health workers, doctors and nurses are committed to providing you with the highest quality care. If you ever feel that this has not been achieved, please contact the manager, Kendy Rogers, on 08 8082 9777 to discuss the matter.



**Kendy Rogers**  
Service Manager:  
PHCS

#### Regular services

- Doctors
- Nurses
- Health workers
- Child health nurses
- Midwives
- Dietician
- Primary mental health workers
- Alcohol and other drug staff
- Psychologist
- Kids dentist
- Adult dentist
- Women's health
- Pharmacist
- Social Worker

#### Occasional services

- Heart specialist
- Kidney specialist
- Diabetes specialist
- Child health specialist
- Eye specialist
- Alcohol specialist
- Smoking specialist
- Podiatry
- Optometrist
- Psychiatrist
- Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist
- Pain Specialist

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