

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

**A snapshot report on the status of
NSW Aboriginal Cultural Venues**

Produced by Museums & Galleries of NSW

With the support of Terri Janke & Company

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of NSW**



Create NSW
Arts, Screen & Culture

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

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WARNING

The document contains names of deceased persons of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. It also contains some language that might be considered offensive.

Important legal notice

The laws and policies cited in this book are current as at August 2017. They are generally discussed for the purposes of providing this report. No person should rely on the contents of this report for a specific legal matter but should obtain professional legal advice from a qualified legal practitioner.

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1. Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.

2. In conjunction with indigenous peoples, States shall take effective measures to recognise and protect the exercise of these rights

Article 31 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

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INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the original *Living Centres for Living Cultures* strategy paper Steve Miller wrote:

The holistic nature of Aboriginal culture means a multidisciplinary approach is appropriate and possible: artefacts and archival material, genealogies, libraries, photographs, visual art, performance, storytelling, music, dance, oral histories, ecology of the natural landscape, sustainable living, astronomy and education all have their place. Living centres for living cultures also mean places for community functions, festivals and markets, ceremonies and celebrations: births, deaths and marriages. Sustainability of centres requires sustainability of communities: training and development opportunities: artist workshops and residences, facilities for physical activities such as dance tuition and physical fitness; homework centres, working with youth at risk, day care, engagement of Elders and regular activities, including afterhours activities. All of these are potential considerations within Aboriginal culture for centres that serve their communities and beyond.

As this 2017 snapshot, *Living Centres for Living Cultures 2*, reports, these holistic aspirations are happening, though rarely if ever does it occur in the one location. In other words, Aboriginal owned cultural venues in NSW have the will and the desire but have yet to reach sufficient budget levels, through funding and their own income streams, to achieve their full potential. That potential could be described as:

- first and foremost, community centres immersed in local Aboriginal culture that offer a range of programming and services
- Secondly as bridging spaces to the broader regional communities, interpreting Aboriginal culture, heritage and arts
- Thirdly, of interest to tourists from across Australia and internationally

Venues that have attempted to attract tourists without the primary and secondary focus are rarely successful. In part this supports the extensive tourism research that says that visitors want an authentic Aboriginal experience i.e. one that involves Aboriginal people themselves. But it also is a testament to the reciprocation principles that are core to Aboriginal survival. That is, the venues have been conceived and built through the will and desire of their community; they continue to operate because of their responses to their community through programming.

Sometimes, the diversity of programming as a consequence of this holistic approach has not been helpful for interactions with the various tiers of Government. It is nearly always helpful if a Government Department has specific funded objectives it wants to achieve but at other times the involvement of cultural venues in social and environmental programming, for example, may not be easily understood or supported. It can become easy for programming and sometimes venues to 'fall through the cracks'. This is particularly evident in the current analysis where, after a history of regular operational funding sources ceasing to exist, including the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and work for the dole, none of the centres interviewed claimed to have annual operational funding.

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Less than a handful have independent income and a few more may have position funding but this, along with project funding, does not allow for the sort of strategic programming that can create the holistic cultural centre described above.

It is against this background that much of the focus of the recommendations in this report, guided largely by some of the key players, managers of Aboriginal cultural venues themselves, highlights the need for a strategic focus in funding for sustainability and resilience to occur. Such funding needs to consistently sustain the centres themselves and the infrastructure that supports them, essentially the Aboriginal Culture, Heritage & Arts Association (ACHAA), for which Museums & Galleries of NSW, the author of this report, provides secretariat support. ACHAA's membership, these key Aboriginal owned cultural venues are also keen that its role and the knowledge and experience it represents is recognized - that it has authority and influence to be consulted and shape the future of NSW Aboriginal culture, heritage & arts. Accordingly, it has asked that its letter of support be included in this report. The full list of recommendations follows this executive summary.

This snapshot report contains reference to 43 current players – Aboriginal operated NSW cultural venues mainly – and where possible details the impact of their location, building and surrounding grounds, income sources, governance, staffing, collection management and engagement. This information has been gathered from surveys, roundtable discussion, field trips and previous documentation including the exhibition booklet for the current ACHAA exhibition on tour, *From our place: an exhibition from NSW Aboriginal Cultural Centres*. In the absence of such information, website references have been used and occasionally knowledge gathered from previous field visits by Steve Miller, M&G NSW's Aboriginal Programs Manager.

In many of these case studies it is clear the success, the launch and establishing of a cultural venue and sustaining it, is due to the critical mix of people (with the drive and passion for their culture), places (suitable location, sometimes on country or a sight of significance) and circumstances (particularly accessible funding and knowledge of how to access it). Instability in any of these factors can threaten the ongoing viability of the venue.

The snapshot also refers to the engagement of the key Sydney collecting institutions, sampling their involvement with the regional Aboriginal owned centres in the past 12 months. Some have had more involvement than others and some of those that have had less engagement express interest in being more involved. This report recommends this would be best accomplished in a coordinated and networked manner and encourages their engagements with ACHAA as Associate Members as a first step towards such networking.

The snapshot also includes two case studies of a regional public gallery and public museum working closely in very positive ways with their Aboriginal communities for artistic and cultural outcomes as well as social development. There are many more examples of this, including volunteer museums and other project exhibitions. Organisations such as Museums & Galleries of NSW and Regional Arts working strategically and organically have contributed to this. While the outcomes appear attractive in the vein of reconciliation, this report focuses more on the strength of empowerment for Aboriginal communities through their own cultural determinism i.e. they are best served by a cultural venue that they own and use. The snapshot section is completed by the suggestion that more keeping places and cultural centres may open through the efforts of the Local Aboriginal Land Council

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(through their strategic business planning) and the Language and Culture Nests, which have been further strengthened in their work by recent legislation.

Steve Miller provides further analysis of the cultural venues in the introduction to the snapshot section, which also includes a location map of the venues. A web link beneath the map indicates an interactive online version where the venues are named and detailed.

A report like this cannot happen in a vacuum, there a large number of players and the landscape is continually dynamic and changing. This is referenced in the Current Developments section. There is also a brief history highlighting some of the previous support and a desktop research section of key documents at the end of the report.

The producers of this report thank Create NSW for this opportunity to present *Living Centres for Living Cultures 2* and look forward to your consideration of the recommendations in conjunction with the forthcoming conference at Muru Mittigar Aboriginal Culture Centre on 8 and 9 November 2017.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue to support and fund ACHAA

The Aboriginal Culture Heritage and Arts Association's strategic plan is an existing action plan for the development of the sector and should be supported. For instance, in its strategic action to distribute and market product between the centres, ACHAA is providing a practical antidote to the sale of fake art dilemma. ACHAA would also benefit from its own website, with database and members only section as well as social media development including training and support for centre staff (i.e. this is an additional skill requiring additional time and should be remunerated). ACHAA's Committee is also pushing for greater awareness and engagement with ACHAA by key government and other stakeholders seeking its advice and expertise. ACHAA's letter of support regarding this research report is at the end of this section. The current version of ACHAA's strategic plan is included in the desktop research section at the end of this report.

2. Three-year funding for ACHAA Meetings and Conference (travel and accommodation)

As initial support, ACHAA should be funded to conduct in person meetings for the association, and for fees or payment of costs for filling position when members attend meetings. ACHAA Committee plus relevant core members should meet twice a year in Sydney at a cultural venue (rotating list). These meetings as well as dealing with ACHAA business (including one as AGM) would introduce the host organisation and key staff. It would also be an opportunity to meet and receive presentations from other key stakeholders and network e.g. Office of Aboriginal Affairs, NSW Aboriginal Land Councils, Language & Culture Nests, Destination NSW, Office of Environment & Heritage. These two meetings would occur in the first and third years. In the second year another ACHAA Conference should be held, preferably at a regional Aboriginal cultural venue. ACHAA members continually emphasise the desire and benefits they get from visiting each other's venues as the best means to understanding other's operations and programming.

3. Funding to measure the economic and social impact of the Aboriginal cultural venues on their towns and regions

This would provide fact based credibility to the claims of the cultural venues as genuine community and state assets and support their individual cases for more baseline operational funding and development that recognises they do more than just provide a cultural outlet. Recognising the full range of these programs and benefits would assist ACHAA to be included in regional development and state planning.

4. Support operational funding

Some of these centres were established in the 80's, 90's and early 2000's and funding models have changed, several times, since then. So, where a cultural centre might have had operational funding on a three-year cycle in the past that is not the case today. Operational and programming funding needs to be considered across the full range of activities and services these centres can provide, not just subsistence, so that they and their communities can reach their full potential.

5. Support infrastructure funding

The centres should be funded for their infrastructure and redevelopment requests. Some of these proposals are many years old now and may be considered urgent. A couple of centres still operate

from leased premises. A couple of others have exhibition displays that need replacing and updating. Infrastructure support will support better program delivery, increase exhibition space for temporary exhibitions to attract repeat visitation, drive further tourist visitation and enhance reputation of centres.

6. Encourage greater engagement from the major collecting institutions

Some collecting institutions engage and support better than others and some have long and successful engagement in the sector. Some regional centres are better at attracting a range of support from several collecting institutions. Not all collecting institutions are Associate Members of ACHAA. There is some activity, e.g. Sydney Living Museums which might be considered not to have an obvious remit in the area, which suggests being an ACHAA Associate Member has helped connect the institutions to these regional centres. All collecting institutions could become ACHAA Associate members (for \$50 per annum). This would improve their appreciation and awareness of the regional Aboriginal cultural venues work and provide a network through which they can get involved.

7. Engage Aboriginal people in management of each organization, recognise the Aboriginal skills base and support Aboriginal careers in cultural centres

It would appear few Aboriginal people involved in culture are also necessarily interested in managing cultural venues. On the other hand, volunteers for Boards are frequently stretched with other more pressing board commitments. And there is the ever pressing need to engage younger people and youth to succeed the current generations. Solutions to these issues are not simple and Aboriginal arts and culture does not necessarily offer obvious and successful career paths for many but that doesn't mean Governments and other stakeholders shouldn't keep trying, particularly in an area such as culture which has a prescribed Aboriginal skill set as a starting point.

8. Consider support for a server with Indigenous protocols database system

State Library of NSW is reportedly close to making this available. It would need ongoing support to roll it out to communities and have them invest in uploading knowledge and digital material (photographs/audiovisual recordings, oral histories, scanned documents etc) and may even represent skills development and paid work. Muru Mittigar has some experience in data entry of cultural materials (classifications and criteria for example) and may also be able to assist and advise. Such work would represent an online digital keeping place, independent of the state institution at less cost than a physical state based Aboriginal cultural centre.

9. Support Museums & Galleries of NSW for its work with Aboriginal cultural centres, keeping places, knowledge centres and museums and galleries

In a relatively brief period and with (the then) Arts NSW funding support, ACHAA and M&G NSW have formed a positive partnership. The centres are networked, supportive of one another and staff are developing professionally. M&G NSW provides secretariat and coordination, informs members of opportunities for funding and otherwise through newsletters and social media and brings the group together. It has provided the coordination and produced the written materials for ACHAA's exhibition from our place. M&G NSW needs to be able to continue to support other centres that are not yet ACHAA members while encouraging them to join as well as support requests for advice for developing new centres. Specific workshops and mentorship programming needs may become obvious over time e.g. the 2016 collections management and documentation program, and M&G NSW needs to be able to respond. On-going travel budgets are non-existent.

ACHAA Letter of Support



NSW Aboriginal Culture, Heritage and Arts Association Inc

Michael Brealey
CEO
Create NSW
Level 5, 323 Castlereagh Street
SYDNEY, NSW 2000
17 October 2017

Dear Michael,

ACHAA is a coalition that represents and supports a network of Aboriginal culture, heritage and arts venues so that they may be resilient and locally sustainable.

We add value to the landscape of Aboriginal arts, culture, heritage and tourism and work closely on the ground with our Aboriginal communities.

Consequently we believe our knowledge and experience of their arts and cultural aspirations can assist the State Government with the development and delivery of policy and programs.

We ask that ACHAA be recognized as a strategic partner in the development and delivery of Aboriginal Arts, Culture and Heritage in NSW and be consulted on the NSW Government's arts, culture and heritage policy.

We further ask for your support, financially and otherwise towards fulfillment of our strategic plan, including supporting with funding our need to meet and network regularly while still ensuring our centre can remain open and function normally in our absence. This networking can also include supporting our introductions to other key stakeholders and encouraging where possible recognition of the significance and contribution of the Aboriginal culture, heritage and arts of NSW that we represent.

We thank you for the opportunity to focus on the development, challenges and issues of our sector through the *Living Centres for Living Cultures 2* Report and look forward to working closely in the future.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David Crew'.

David Crew

Manager, Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre

Chair, Aboriginal Culture, Heritage & Arts Inc

Aboriginal Culture Heritage and Arts Association Inc. Secretariat:
C/o M&G NSW, Level 1, 10 Hickson Rd, The Rocks NSW 2000
P:02 9252 8300 e: achaa@mgnsw.org.au ABN: 83 933 088 435

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

A report like this cannot be produced in isolation. Following is a list of current initiatives that will have some anticipated impact on the regional NSW Aboriginal cultural venues landscape.

- NSW Aboriginal Cultural Heritage reforms

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/achreform/

- NSW Parliamentary inquiry into museums and galleries (includes Powerhouse Museum move to Parramatta)

www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=2403#tab-termsreference

NSW Parliament passes Aboriginal Language Legislation

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-10-11/nsw-passes-unprecedented-laws-to-revive-indigenous-languages/9039746>

- Create NSW Museums Strategy
- Major infrastructure funding through the Regional Cultural Fund
- ACHAA strategic plan
- Museums Galleries Australia 10 year Roadmap project

www.museumsgalleriesaustraliawa.org.au/museums-galleries-australia-indigenous-roadmap

- National Indigenous Cultural Authority

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board of the Australia Council continues to work towards this objective

<https://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/presentations/2008-wentworth-janke-terri-vision-for-national-indigenous-cultural-authority.pdf>

- Museums & Galleries of NSW Strategic Plan 2019-21
- National Keeping Place
 - <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/postcolonial-blog/2015/oct/13/keeping-place-for-stolen-indigenous-remains-should-take-priority-over-anzac-centre>
 - <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-06-16/call-for-a-national-indigenous-keeping-place/7516228>
- National Aboriginal Art Gallery (Alice Springs)

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- <https://news.aboriginalartdirectory.com/2017/03/national-indigenous-art-gallery-for-alice-progresses.php>
- Sydney Modern re-development of Art Gallery of NSW to include Indigenous art
- <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-06-14/nsw-art-gallery-gets-funding-for-27sydney-modern27-extension/8616094>
- M&G NSW/ACHAA *Living Centres for Living Cultures* Conference at Muru Mittigar Aboriginal Cultural Centre 8 and 9 November
- State Library of NSW initiatives to establish an Indigenous protocols based collections and knowledge database which may allow for community ownership and protection
- Proposals for Keeping Places/cultural centres at Blacktown, Badgery's Creek and Parramatta
- Other NSW LALC business plan proposals for cultural centres/keeping places/galleries
- NSW Aboriginal Cultural Centre, City of Sydney's Aboriginal Cultural Centre proposal (Eora Journey), National Aboriginal Cultural Centre
- While sometime crossing over in outcomes, these three cultural centre proposals have been conceptualised and discussed at various times but currently there appears to be no firm progression on any one proposal.
- Other specific impacts and changes that have occurred within regional NSW Aboriginal cultural venues are listed in the following analysis section of the snapshot, on page 13

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SNAPSHOT

The detailed version of the map can be found at

<https://www.zeemaps.com/view?group=2729759&x=153.802413&y=-30.321229&z=12>

On the zeemaps site, you can click on a flag for venue information

Map



Legend

Aboriginal Cultural Centres	
Aboriginal Knowledge Centres	
Aboriginal Artists Initiatives	
Aboriginal Museums	
Aboriginal Keeping Places	
Language and Culture Hubs	
Other	

Analysis

The snapshot section attempts to cluster Aboriginal owned cultural venues by their nomenclature but notes that sometimes this naming has followed the community's wishes rather than a desire to fulfil a specific vision associated with a name such as cultural centre or keeping place. Still, the groupings do give some general indications of the more successful models, if success is determined by activity, usage and visitation. The cultural centres in general offer examples of broad and extensive programming and usage, although sometimes a knowledge centre or museum or an 'other' such as Dharriwaa Elders Group may operate in a similar way. This can include heritage collection management, permanent displays, temporary exhibitions and regular programming for its Aboriginal community e.g. dance, language or visual arts workshops.

They can also develop and manage cultural trails and sites including signage and language, be a departure point for tours, offer art and merchandise for sale, have cafes and meeting rooms, reference libraries and genealogical databases and, if they have surrounding grounds, include bush tucker gardens or nature trails. They can host functions, community meetings and workshops. They can be points of dissemination of information both from the community and from governments and be involved in other social programming such as an Elders centres, day care or homework centre. They can also expand their cultural programming to the environment e.g. care for country. They work with their Aboriginal community, provide a point of engagement with the broader community and are an asset to a town's regional tourism mix.

The keeping places listed, by comparison, largely operate from local Aboriginal land council offices and tend to offer passive engagement. They are open to visitors and may on occasion have someone who speak to objects but programming if offered is on a temporary project basis. Occasionally they may support an art group, through either workshop or exhibition space.

Artist initiatives tend to be vibrant and engaged with their artist communities and attractive to visitors. There is no one model, each is in response to its community, including one young mothers' group in Tamworth. They can operate as cooperatives or corporations and this tends to enhance their longevity, which contributes to their success. Others, such as the Ngemba Wailwan artists of Warren, operate more as an informal artists group by choice: it limits engagement with bureaucracy, freeing its members to concentrate on their art.

This report's snapshot identifies the following:

7	Aboriginal Cultural Centres
3	Knowledge Centres
9	Aboriginal artist initiatives
3	Aboriginal Museums
10	Aboriginal Keeping Places
5	Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests
6	other
43	Total of NSW Aboriginal cultural venues

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In reality the total figure is approximate. A venue such as the Mutawinji Cultural Centre (under other) is part of a co-management agreement in a national park. The five Aboriginal language and culture nests listed are a fully government funded initiative managed by Aboriginal people that have yet to fulfil their flagged potential to establish keeping places inside their coordination offices. Keeping place definitions can also be very broad within the community ie a local Aboriginal land council may have a small collection of artefacts it keeps in a safe, a locked drawer or a display cabinet that it calls a keeping place, or it may have a simple structure erected near a burial ground or bora ring as its keeping place. This report has not included these. The keeping places referred to generally have sufficient display material and explanatory labelling to attract visitation but are otherwise generally inert in terms of regular programming.

Additionally, even larger centres close periodically and then reopen, usually when another community member feels they have the drive to carry the baton for a while and the sector remains “dynamic” because of this. In the past 18 months alone:

- Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre, Mura Mittigar Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Miromaa Indigenous Knowledge Centre (language and technology) have moved into new leased premises in Deniliquin, Rouse Hill Farm and Newcastle respectively
- Minjungbal Aboriginal Museum in Tweeds Heads has re-opened under the guidance of a new manager (who applied to initially volunteer)
- Boomalli Aboriginal Artist’s Cooperative has begun investigating legal definitions, requirements and benefits of becoming an arts centre
- Armidale Aboriginal Cultural Centre has undertaken a revamp of programming including new Aboriginal staffing and programming committee at the request of and with funding from (the then) Arts NSW to run workshops coordinated by Museums & Galleries of NSW
- Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council has begun work on Stages 2 and 3 of its site which includes development of the Murrook Cultural Centre and hospital services (this is self-funded from its Sand Dune Adventures and sand mining royalties incomes)
- Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation (home of the Illawarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre) has employed a new CEO after several years of position vacancy
- A new cultural centre Wungunja has opened at Trangie and there is a new Aboriginal Museum/Keeping Place in Narromine
- Yarrawarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Corindi Beach has had a change of governance with the community agreeing to hand over management to the Gurelgham Corporation of Grafton
- Boolarng Nangamai Aboriginal Art & Culture Studio (BNAACS) of Gerrigong, no longer has a site based practice and has scaled back operations

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- Brewarrina Aboriginal Cultural Museum, still struggling to have opening hours or open by appointment, considers a new governance structure outside the Brewarrina Business Centre
- Having successfully secured its access road, Monaroo Bobberrer Gudu starts to ramp up activity including hosting an Aboriginal Writers Conference

It is likely the landscape will continue to experience change. The NSW Aboriginal Land Council has encouraged its 120 local Aboriginal land council members to consider culture and heritage in their business planning, including the establishment of keeping places and cultural centres and now offers funding support through its community fund. The Language & Culture Nests may still pursue the establishment of a keeping place at each of the five coordination offices.

Finally, this snapshot includes just two examples of a public regional gallery and a public regional museum engagement with their Aboriginal communities and a brief summary of activity with regional Aboriginal cultural venues from the major Sydney collecting institutions. These also are shifting fields of engagements, ones that are currently trending towards increased engagement and with increasing success. The two regional examples included are considered best practice where there is not an existing Aboriginal cultural venue, but they are models that have not been able to transfer to other regional public cultural venues. Even if they were, there is a fundamental question about self-determinism of culture for Aboriginal people that must be answered before rushing to apply these models elsewhere. More so, Aboriginal people have the right to benefit through income, jobs and other opportunities, from their own culture and heritage. This is in line with recommendation 31 from the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples included on the inside cover of this report.

Further analysis by the way of comment on sector challenges and issues by the five Aboriginal cultural venue managers who participated in the roundtable discussion at the State Library of NSW on 30 August can be found after the snapshot section, beginning on Page 68.

Aboriginal Cultural Centres x 7

Armidale and Region Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Keeping Place Inc (ACCKP)



Outside Armidale and Region Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Keeping Place Inc

(Date from survey, roundtable and ACHAA exhibition booklet)

www.acckp.com.au

www.facebook.com/ArmACCKP

www.mgnsw.org.au/organisations/armidale-aboriginal-cultural-centre-keeping-place

Location and venue: ACCKP is in Kentucky Street Armidale, a cultural strip including the New England Regional Art Museum and Museum of Printing near the cbd. Contain a gallery, a photographic exhibition space, an artefact exhibition space, a family history room, a gift shop, a café and an artist's boutique. There is a half-completed gallery funded by Arts NSW but not completed. There is an undercover area that also needs work done, as the ceiling under the gutter is rotting. Climate control for the collection is urgently needed.

Opening hours: Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm; Saturday, 10am-2pm

Visitation: 16,500 per annum includes schools and school holiday programs. As well as the website, visitors also find out about ACCKP through Facebook page, Armidale Visitors Information Centre, Lonely Planet Guide and daily radio announcements.

Income: workshops, room hire, café, gift shop, art sales, Friends of the ACKKP, Corporate partners

Governance: ACCKP is an incorporated association and registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission. Board of custodian of eight (four Aboriginal, four non-Aboriginal, includes an archaeologist) meets four times a year

Staffing: Five (3 Aboriginal staff)

Director (full time)

Creative Producer (fulltime)

Aboriginal Men's Coordinator (four days per week)

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Aboriginal women's Coordinator (one day per week)

Finance Officer (1 day per week)

One casual admin position (working 3-6 hours per week)

The head of the Friends of the ACCKP is a volunteer. There is an Aboriginal men's group and an Aboriginal women's group.

Collection: The collection is from donation and loans and comprises:

ACCKP Painting Register, ACCKP Stone Artefacts, ACCKP Books Register, ACCKP Family History Record, ACCKP Artefact Collection, RTA Stone Collection, Tingha Green Valley Collection, Bobbert Stone Collection, ACCKP Audio Recordings

ACCKP holds collections for the Roads and Maritime Services. All objects have been catalogued and have location numbering. The Aboriginal Women's Toolkit has been assessed for its significance with a grant via M&G NSW.

Engagement: Exhibitions are changed six times a year. Each opening features an art, artefact and a photography exhibition, so 18-20 exhibitions per annum.

There are men's and women's groups, a photography club, a Friends of ACCKP group and a corporate engagement program.

ACCKP has collaborated with:

Wadjar Indigenous Art Gallery, (Yarrowarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre) Corindi Beach, Dunghutti-ngaku Aboriginal Art Gallery, Kempsey, Bundarra School- Crossing the Divide, an Alternative Education Program, Bundarra, Gamilarart Gallery, Tamworth (This gallery has since closed), Gomeroi Gaaynggal Art Gallery, Tamworth, Jambama Art Gallery, Casino, New England Regional Art Museum, Armidale, Tamworth Regional Art Gallery, Tamworth, University of New England Art Collection, Armidale, House with No Steps, Art Competition, Armidale and Tamworth.

The purpose of the ACCKP is to develop, promote and preserve Aboriginal arts and culture by engaging with community through the operation of a professional art gallery and cultural centre. It is inspired locally but has national and international appeal.

The centre was built in 1988 under the Bicentennial Program and opened on 26 November that year. The University of New England (UNE)'s assistance with the running of the ACCKP through the Education Faculty started in 1990. Four years later, that responsibility passed to the Vice Chancellor's unit. Then in 1997 the ACCKP was incorporated and the responsibility of running the centre was transferred to its Board of Custodians. Finally, the land title was transferred to the centre's Trust in 2006.

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“For about 17 years it was up and down for the centre, if they had a good director it was active then in some years it would flop,” says the current Director, Malaysian-born Daisy William. “I took over the centre about 12 years ago. It had just about closed down; the funding bodies had redrawn their funds and the local council had given them an ultimatum to appoint a director who had a business background. So, the Federal Government gave the centre some money to appoint a director, that was then how I got into it I was the director of the University of New England language centre and my PHD is in corporate governance and financial management of not for profit organizations. Now we have such a great board for the last 12 years,”

Networking is a strength of the centre. “The local Aboriginal community is very involved in the centre through the Elders’ groups, artists, other Aboriginal organisations and individuals,” says Daisy. This has resulted in an increase in visitor numbers each year.

“We have over 80 aboriginal artists and we also work with other art galleries. We were given some money to help other art galleries in their management and exhibitions.

We (recently) signed a MOU with the regional Art Museum which is only next door to us and we have corporate partner’s friends of the ACCKP. With our exhibitions, if a family member has work then they all support that member where before there may have been family differences. Also, the local government, every morning the heritage bus stops at the cultural centre, mind you we had to push for it.”

Illawarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Keeping Place

(Data from survey, via interview/field trip visit and website)

<http://www.iac.org.au/>

Location and Venue: The Illawarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre is located near the Wollongong cbd at the entrance to the Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation building in Kenny Street.

Opening hours: 8.30- 4.30 Monday to Friday

Visitation: About 520 visitors per annum mostly drop in. In addition to the website, visitors find out about the cultural centre through word of mouth, meeting spaces used for meetings by communities; and students googling for contact with community

Income: Hire of facilities for meetings and community centre

Governance: The Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation is not for profit organisation registered with the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) and has DGR status. The Board of 12 is all Aboriginal and meets 11 times a year (ie monthly) plus the AGM.

Staffing: The Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation has a new CEO William Henry who started at the end of September. The organisation has been without a CEO for some time with the Board or an occasional other staff member acting in the role for some time. Federal funding for the Cultural Officer position was also cut four years ago. As such, the cultural centre component, comprising a large permanent display of showcases and theme panels at the entrance to the centre, has been neglected. Despite being without a CEO, the corporation has maintained a considerable program of social welfare initiatives, including a separate child care centre.

Collections: Essentially there are three collections:

- the Jumbulla Collection of artefacts: origins unknown, mostly donated, 100% unprovenanced and stored offsite in shipping containers but believed to accounted for as “stocktake”
- oral history collection, compiled with the National Parks & Wildlife Service
- Display collection: what is on display in the centre, has minimal labelling and provenance

Engagement: The cultural aspects have been the establishment of a walking trail, talks to Universities or TAFE’s by Board Members, participation in NAIDOC with the Wollongong City Council and an Elders Display at the Wollongong City Arts Gallery every year.

While the new CEO is expected to have numerous competing priorities, the Board is interested in revamping the display area but believes the first steps would be to seek funding for a paid position similar to the previous cultural officer.

Muda Aboriginal Cultural Centre (2CuzFM)

(Data from ACHAA exhibition booklet)

www.2cuzfm.com/

www.facebook.com/pages/2CUZFM/188420984617506

Based in Bourke, Muda broadcasts as 2Cuz FM to regional towns across north west NSW in local Aboriginal language and English. It also operates a cultural centre with workshops, gallery and sculpture park.

Muda is from the Yandruwandha language meaning identity but in the Aboriginal sense it encompasses much more: who you are, where you are from, your totem and your connection to country and culture.

The language centre delivers the Yandruwandha language to the Bourke preschool, primary and high schools but the main activity has become the operation of 2CUZFM, an Aboriginal community radio station.

Muda started broadcasting in 1999 and received its full radio licence in 2004. 2CUZFM broadcasts 24/7 throughout north western NSW including to Lightning Ridge, Walgett, Brewarrina and Goodooga. As well as the 106.5 frequency, 2CUZFM can also be streamed on the internet via the 2CUZFM website.

Muda board and staff strongly believe in training and educating local youth about Indigenous media as a means to increase skills and boost confidence. Muda and 2CUZFM have grown to become a platform of support for other start-up Aboriginal groups in Bourke. This has been a conscious direction pursued by the corporation.

Muda now actively supports the River Boys, a local Indigenous youth dance group. It also helped establish and continues to support an Aboriginal artists' gallery in the centre of town.

Muda also runs studio and cultural tours, free of charge, and is now assisting an Aboriginal group to set up walking tours of the river and town.

These are proving popular with the tourists that flow through the area from April to November. Muda is also involved in the production of language items for radio, which is planned to grow to cover the major language groups within the wider Bourke region. During the past few years, Muda has been building up within its grounds an Aboriginal Cultural Centre, including bush plants and signage describing their usage.

Muda hopes to commence storytelling sessions soon. The garden area has also been the focus of a number of waste metal, sculptural workshops. These sculptures, all with a cultural context, are spread throughout the garden area.

Muda's staff are a mixture of volunteers and paid employees, Aboriginal and non-Indigenous, of all ages.

Murrook Cultural Centre



Murrook Cultural Centre exterior and interior
(Data from survey and field trip)

www.worimi.org.au

www.facebook.com/MurrookCulturalCentre

Location and venue: Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council owns the freehold land on which Murrook is located, a former theme park of 5.5 ha that contains some scarred trees. It has occupied the land for 14 years and operated its public services from there for nine years.

With a percentage of royalties from nearby sand mining, it began its popular Sand Dune Adventures, quad bike touring through the dunes to uncovered middens.

Worimi lalc is currently in stages 2 and 3 of a five-stage development of the site, which includes the cultural centre Murrook and the expansion of hospitality offerings for eg conferences and weddings.

Opening Hours: 8 am to 4pm Monday to Friday (Worimi LALC)
9 am to 4pm every day except some public holidays (Sand Dune Adventures)

Visitation: More than 100 schools per annum visit the Cultural Heritage Unit (with school sizes varying between 10 and 300 students).

Sand Dune Adventures which depart from Murook and comprise trail bike tours and midden inspections with a guide has 17,000 participants per annum. Visitation is seasonal with peaks and troughs.

Worimi LALC has a membership of 350 and there is an estimated regional Aboriginal population of 2500, many of whom reportedly visit the centre repeatedly throughout the year, catching up with family, friends and community, using the attractive grounds around a lagoon for picnics and functions or attending language classes.

Visitors find out about Murrook/Sand Dune Adventures through marketing and word of mouth

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Income: Sand Dune Adventures generates about \$1m a year. Worimi also receives a percentage of the private sand mining, estimated to be another \$1m per year. School visits to the cultural heritage unit, café and shop sales.

Governance: The governing body for the Murrook Cultural Centre is the Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council, registered under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act of 1983. It is a registered charity with the Australian Charity and Not-for-Profit Commission. The 10-member all-Aboriginal Board of Worimi LALC meets a minimum of 11 times a year

Staff: The Murrook CEO is the CEO of the Worimi LALC Andrew Smith. Across the organisation's activities there are 17 full time staff and 33 casuals who work on average between 15 and 20 hours per week and are employed across a range of business activities: natural resource management, tourism, cultural sites monitoring, cultural heritage and education, a swim-safe centre and the land council management. A skills audit is being conducted which will help identify new staff and skills required but areas of consideration include gallery/museum curator, archiving, marketing, event management, event management, hospitality and catering. Murrook occasionally will hold a community volunteer day e.g. for tube stock planting.

Collection: Murrook has a collection of stone and shell artefacts from construction site monitoring by Worimi cultural officers. They have been housed for many years without recorded provenance. There are other objects that have been extensively card file recorded and rehoused. A longer-term project has started to record and store items appropriately. For instance, where objects were previously stored in hessian sacks and boxes, the organisation has now acquired lockable toolboxes to store items. To date collection management advice has not been sought. The collection has not been assessed and while considered valuable to the community, the lack of provenance for the majority of it would impact negatively on its value. Workshops with the community to help establish knowledge and provenance are envisioned.

Despite the lack of provenance, Murrook does identify most of the material as coming from its local area and unusually for an Aboriginal organisation with a collection policy, it has turned away individuals trying to off load collections, advising them it is their responsibility to return it to its rightful area.

As a lands council, Worimi is a registered stakeholder with the Office of Environment & heritage (under the National Parks & Wildlife Act) for the protection of Aboriginal culture and heritage. It has a 'quasi agreement' with the Worimi Conservation Lands Board (NPWS) to house any significant artefacts collected off lands considered to be exposed to risk of removal or damage.

Engagement: Free weekly language classes in Gathang for community; regular camps for schools (paid) and community (free); cultural heritage and education programs for education groups, ngo's and government organisations.

Muru Mittigar Aboriginal Cultural Centre

(Data from roundtable and ACHAA exhibition booklet)

www.murumittigar.com.au/

www.facebook.com/pages/Muru-Mittigar-Aboriginal-Cultural-Centre/296483347116047

Location and Venue: Muru Mittigar is now located at Rouse Hill Farm, part of Sydney Living Museums, after many years at Penrith Lakes.

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 9:00am – 4:00pm (Bookings required)

Visitation: 15,000 per annum

Collection: Holds 250,000 objects, mainly from excavation and the Australian Museum.

Staff: 25 on site, includes Aboriginal Rangers program

Located in Western Sydney since 1998, Muru Mittigar means pathway to friends in the Darug language.

“Muru Mittigar was created with the intention of promoting increased understanding of Darug and wider Aboriginal culture, while providing benefit to Aboriginal families in Western Sydney through training and employment,” says Darug woman and Muru Mittigar Project Officer Leanne Watson. “Passing on and sharing culture is also teaching people to be aware of the environment and to respect the environment and all that it holds. We have many mobs from many countries that are part of our Muru Mittigar mob.

“To sustain our centre we are also an Aboriginal social enterprise which provides mentoring and support, cultural connections, cultural training and employment through land management works, an onsite Provenance Plant Nursery, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management, financial counselling and No Interest Loans (NILS), gallery, retail shop, training cafe and tourism.

“Our Muru mob and communities are supported through art workshops, cultural training and culture camps that enable people to create stories, art and wooden artefacts and to also retain strong connections to people and country.

Muru Mittigar grew out of the opportunity to conduct cultural heritage work and care for artefacts that were uncovered from the sand and gravel mining that was being conducted in the area at the time.

Because of strategic planning with KPMG and more recently with Deloitte, Muru Mittigar has divided its business into Country, Community and Culture.

Country is more our environmental work where our contracting work happens, we employ about 25 staff out in the sites between Byron and Narooma and the Northern Tablelands, loosely referred to

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as Aboriginal Ranger programs. It's a job seeker work place training model for young Aboriginal people.

Community is community finance and Indigenous financial counselling service which is funded through Fair Trading and sponsored by NAB and some other commercial competitive tenders. "We have loaned over a million dollars and we have a \$150,000 trust fund that NAB has provided and we have expansion plans into Redfern and Illawarra," says Muru Mittigar CEO Peter Chia. "It's mainly helped us get 15,000 visitors a year, mainly students and organized groups plus govt cultural awareness training, men's programs and corporate cultural awareness.

Culture is where Muru Mittigar started as a knowledge, tourist and business centre which was based near the Penrith Lakes in early 2000. "We have sort become a keeping place by default," Peter Chia says. "We are in Rouse Hill so we have two sites now."

Wungunja Cultural Centre (Trangie Local Aboriginal Land Council)

(Data drawn from the Narromine News website and NSW Aboriginal Land Council website press release)

www.narrominenewsonline.com.au/story/4804542/opening-of-centre-six-years-in-the-making/

www.alc.org.au/newsroom/media-releases/nswalc-community-fund-supporting-wiradjuri-culture-at-trangie.aspx

The Wungunja Cultural Centre is barely three months old, being officially opened on 28 July 2017. The project to establish a cultural centre in Trangie was first discussed in 2011, when the Trangie Local Aboriginal Land Council purchased the Scout Hall land and buildings on Dandaloo Street. The centre is set to become an attraction for tourists and visitors alike, providing education on culture and heritage and holding historical information, artefacts and records for the local Aboriginal community.

“The community is now getting a lot of family history together so what we’ve got going in the hall is family history records going back to the 1800s and people will be able to access those records,” Trangie LALC chief executive officer Terrie Milgate said. “They’ll also be able to contribute further information to those records and bring photos and records so that the library of information will grow and it will be there for many years to come.”

A pair of carved ceremonial trees has been placed in the centre, returned by the Australian Museum to Trangie after they were removed from Rob McCutcheon’s property Mullah in the 1960s. The centre also houses artefacts from across the central west, as well as further afield.

The official opening will start with a smoking ceremony performed by Uncle Peter Peckham, followed a performance from the Trangie Central School Aboriginal dance group.

"In 2016, Trangie Local Aboriginal Land Council secured a grant from the Community Fund and used the funding to help renovate the building," NSWALC Chair Roy Ah-See said.

Yarrowarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre incorporating Wadjar Regional Indigenous Gallery

(Date from survey, roundtable and ACHAA exhibition booklet)

www.yarrowarra.com.au

www.facebook.com/Yarrowarra.Indigenous.Cultural.Centre

www.mgns.wa.gov.au/organisations/yarrowarra-aboriginal-cultural-centre

Location and venue: Yarrowarra is situated on Red Rock Road, Corindi Beach, approximately 30 kilometres north of Coffs Harbour on the fringe between the mid north coast and the northern rivers regions, which is the northern coastal lowlands of Gumbaynggirr nation.

The cultural centre is placed in close proximity to several Aboriginal sites with place-base embedding of the Yarrowarra archaeological collections. A recommendation from a 2012 significance assessment was that Yarrowarra nominate for Aboriginal Place gazettal (s84). Covering 2.5 ha, Yarrowarra delivers a range of products and services including:

- Nuralamee Conference & Accommodation Centre
- Wadjar Art Gallery featuring local and regional Aboriginal fine art & craft
- Bush Tucker Café
- Jalumbo keeping place housing an extensive range of cultural material
- Community medical services - local delivery
- Cultural experiences and tours including bush tucker, medicine, historical, Aboriginal art, traditional weaving, dance and language
- Residential dwellings (off site). Nuralamee meaning “our home camp” caters for groups of up to 150 and features a fully equipped commercial kitchen and undercover BBQ area. The centre accommodates 70 guests in total.

Opening hours: 10am – 4pm Tuesday to Friday and 10am – 1pm weekends

Visitation: 2500 per annum including schools who can stay overnight (accommodation sleeps 70). As well as the website and facebook page, visitors find out about the centre through word of mouth, visitor information centres, flyers and cross promotional events.

Income: PM+C IAS funding for YACC staff wages and capacity building/training, Club Grants Category 3 infrastructure funding, commissions from sale of artworks, sale of souvenir and craft items, tours and cultural activities/events, donation tin.

Governance: Yarrowarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre is a service of Gurehlgam Corporation Ltd of Grafton (Since 2016). Gurehlgam Corporation Limited is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission. Gurehlgam has a seven-member board (five Aboriginal, two non-Aboriginal) meets monthly. The finance manager and

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CEO are non-Aboriginal. Board members are elected annually. The Wadjar Gallery has a separate public programs reference committee that meets four times per year. It has five members, three Aboriginal including the Aboriginal creative director. The non-Aboriginal committee members have skills and networks that assist with engagement and promotion.

Staff: There is a full time creative director Alison Williams, who reports to the CEO of Gurelgham, Ken Payne. There is also a book keeper and hospitality manager, a casual groundskeeper for 15 hours per week and an Elder who presents tours and cultural activities on demand. Volunteers assist with sales, gallery activities, installations and de-installations. Since Alison Williams has been employed as Creative Director for the past 18 mths, so business is increasing considerably due to collaborations, partnerships, public programs and successful funding – to the point where more staff will be required to facilitate sound collection management, digitizing our collection and delivery of cultural & public programs.

Collection: The community has been collecting for approximately 25 years through research projects, donations, found objects, site work and salvage projects with other government departments. Jalumbo Culture & Heritage Collection includes:

- Canoe from the lake
- Range of ochres & stone tools from Red Rock midden approx. 4,000 yrs old
- Large number of shell & fish bone from Arrawarra midden linked to stone fish traps
- Collections from early fringe camps spanning late 19th & early 20th century
- Photographs, transcribed audio recordings and audio-visual recordings
- Publications & research reports

An “old” cataloging system applies to about 1/3 of the collection (on floppy disk) and printed out spread sheet. About 20% of the collection has no recorded provenance while 30% is more recent manufactured objects designed to display cultural practices. i.e. woven baskets and some wooden implements.

A significance assessment was carried out in 2012 with a variety of recommendations made. Some have already been acted on and others are in planning stages. Funding has been sought and some successfully obtained to facilitate sound collection management and refurbishment in a manner that also reflects the ideology of the local traditional owners. The Garby elders have been involved in all acquisitions and salvages and building information about the history of objects. Office of Environment & Heritage and National Parks & Wildlife Service, Marine Parks (Department of Primary Industries) and University of New England have all had participation, consultation and ongoing interest in Yarrawarra’s collection and sites. Place story books have also been produced in conjunction with Yarrawarra collection and archaeological site surveys.

The collection is stored on site in gallery complex, in archive boxes, sealed plastic bags, map drawers and filing cabinets. Collection boxes are numbered according to survey dates and areas.

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Yarrawarra is in the process of air-conditioning the main building which will assist with consistent climate control. Other desired improvements are:

- Infrastructure- upgrades and extended storage, displays & lighting.
- Air condition and climatic control for conservation.
- Signage and interpretation.
- Digitizing collection.
- Develop digital & interactive displays

Engagement: The Wadjar Gallery opened in 1994 as a cultural service of Yarrawarra and aims to be a centre of excellence in Aboriginal Australian visual arts for the Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers regions of NSW through:

- Promoting access to and the understanding of the Gumbaynggirr culture and coastal Aboriginal visual arts
- Improving the skills level and the socio-economic status of the Aboriginal artists of the region
- Sharing the creativity and skills of Aboriginal artists from other regions
- Developing and conserving a collection of significant cultural material and works from the local
- Aboriginal artists
- Sound management, curatorial and art work conservation practices
- Reinforcing partnerships and maintaining strong

Programs: Art workshops, performances, language camps, tours etc are a continuous cultural practice. Yarrawarra also has foster care camps for Aboriginal children living in foster care within the mid north coast region. This camp incorporates dance, music, bush tucker and arts into the activities to foster cultural awareness and build stronger identity for displaced youth. Catholic dioceses also has Aboriginal Family Camp every year, which also incorporates a number of cultural activities delivered by staff and community members. Create NSW quick response Glen Skuthorpe performance and song writing workshop and Arts & Cultural Projects for Dreaming Trails exhibition. Has scheduled (pending funding through M&G NSW) for audience development, a large public art installation in December, with 9 Aboriginal women/artists and Aboriginal students from 5 regional public schools.

Collaborations: Dunghutti-Ngaku Art Gallery (Kempsey) and Armidale Aboriginal Cultural Centre for sharing exhibition resources.

Dreaming Trails exhibition in partnership with Lismore Regional Gallery involved Elders and knowledge holders from two language groups, site visits and consultations regarding collection objects as part of the exhibition and process for artists to create new work in response to these experiences.

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Grafton Regional Gallery for obtaining a copy of the Lindt photographs for Yarrawarra's collection.

Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery with ongoing discussions about how to incorporate similar or complementary themes in future exhibition programs.

Saltwater Freshwater Alliance for Saltwater Freshwater festival events also scheduled to have closing ceremony for the touring SWFW art Prize exhibition in 2019 with major corroboree event. Wadjar Regional Indigenous Gallery will also host a solo exhibition and engage the winner of the SWFW art prize in further professional development.

ACHAA/M&G NSW current touring exhibition *From Our Place*, sits as a paid member of this association.

Currently participating in M&G NSW standards program.

Yarrawarra is a supply nation member.

Established in 1987 (now in its 30th year), Yarrawarra means happy meeting place.

Its mission is to maintain and share culture, identity and integrity while respecting and preserving heritage for the benefit of future generations. Yarrawarra is proudly owned and operated on a not-for-profit basis by Aboriginal people, predominantly from the Gumbaynggirr language group.

A legacy of the Garby Elders and their vision in the late 80's when they decided they wanted to build a cultural centre. "I guess the location was important," says Creative Director Alison Williams. In 1880 a fence line was built along the edge of Corindi Lake that became a boundary for Crown Reserve or 'no man's land'. On the other side of the fence Aboriginal families camped, spoke language and shared what they hunted, gathered and fished. The Gumbaynggirr people used the plants around Corindi Lake for food, medicine, fire, shelter and tool and basket making. The Yarrawarra bush tucker walk links the cultural centre with the no man's land camps. "The Elders wanted the cultural centre still on country that was identified as being important to the local Aboriginal people," Alison says. "There was a lot of heritage within the area on country that they wanted to register and acknowledge and protect.

"Initially we started out in a caravan on five acres and then with the CDEP and training programs crew a small conference centre was built. That conference centre is now the regional gallery and now we have a larger conferencing centre with accommodation, a heritage collection which spans about 4000 years with some important archives and a great centre as far as mix of practical learning and theoretical learning.

"So there is a lot of hands on things that happen there that's delivered by community and driven by community so that everyone feels passionately and identifies with the cultural centre. I guess that's what really the objective has been to continue cultural maintenance to protect what needs to be protected to educate future generations and ensure that the story continues to be told."

Knowledge Centres x 3

Dhiyaan Aboriginal Centre (Formerly Dhiyaan Indigenous Knowledge Centre)

Steve Miller writes:

The Dhiyaan Indigenous Knowledge Centre in Moree is due to officially re open in November as the Dhiyaan Aboriginal Centre after a sometimes-difficult period of change management in the past few years. The knowledge centres is still in the same Balo Street building, the Moree War Memorial Hall which was built and is maintained by an Act of NSW Parliament but has moved into the space formerly occupied by the Moree Council Library. As such it will have sufficient and proper storage for the thousands of records and photographs it holds of its Aboriginal community as well as space for permanent and temporary exhibitions. A wall has been constructed dividing the Knowledge Centre from the rest of the hall, which will house the TSL collection. The knowledge centres also hold records and other material related to Aboriginal soldiers from Moree district, so there is some fit and crossover. The change management consultant engaged through a grant from Create NSW also recommended the centre should be handed over to the community, but this no longer appears practical or possible, so the centre will remain a facility of the Moree Council.

From Keeping Places and beyond: building cultural futures in NSW a reader, 2011, produced by M&G NSW (various authors):

https://mgnsw.org.au/media/uploads/files/keeping_places_and_beyondnew2.pdf

The Dhiyaan Indigenous Unit, established in Moree in 1995, is part of the Northern Regional Library and Information Services of Moree Plains Shire Council. At its core is a family history and photographic collection encouraging Aboriginal participation within the library. Located in Moree's Balo Street, it has an Aboriginal history unit and a permanent collection with a rich variety of printed material, videos and photographs detailing Kamilaroi life over the years. The Indigenous Unit services the shires of Brewarrina, Gwydir, Moree Plains and Walgett. Within these shires are a substantial number of Aboriginal settlements including Boggabilla, Boomi, Brewarrina, Collarenebri, Mungindi, Toomelah, Walgett and Moree itself. It has traditional Kamilaroi artefacts on display, and aims to increase the understanding of Aboriginal history, culture and knowledge among the wider community through a range of public programs and activities including cultural awareness, family history sessions, Kamilaroi language programs and literacy programs. The collection has grown to much more than just family history and has become one of the biggest regionally held Aboriginal culture and history collections in Australia. The collection includes estimated 90,000 - 110,000 genealogies of local families including a huge collection of Births, Deaths and Marriages certificates. It also includes a database of Aboriginal ex-service people, more than 15,000 photographs relating to local families, birth registrations dating as far back as 1788, burial and cemetery records, Aboriginal postcards (many derogatory) and Aboriginal language records and research

Miromaa Indigenous Knowledge Centre (Language & Technology)

(Data from survey and field trip)

www.miromaa.org.au

www.facebook.com/MiromaaLanguage

Location and Venue: Miromaa Language & Technology Centre has been in its current premises, leased from Yarnteen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation, for one year. The three-storey building is in the Newcastle CBD. At the front of the building is a café shop front that also sells Aboriginal books and art products.

Opening hours: 8am to 3pm Mon-Fri

Visitation: 1050 per annum. Visitors find out about Miromaa from the website, social media, google, Newcastle Tourism, word of mouth.

Income: Aboriginal coffee and gift shop. Miromaa also sub-lets spaces to other Indigenous businesses such as Speaking in Colour (Cherie Johnson) and First Languages Australia (Faith Baisden). Upstairs there is a library and training rooms which can be hired. Miromaa is recognised as a National Aboriginal Language Centre as its core business, funded through the Federal Arts and Languages program but language grants are considered a separate business from the Knowledge Centre.

Governance: Miromaa's governing body is the Arwabukarl Cultural Resource Association Inc. with the trading name Miromaa Aboriginal Language & Technology Centre. This is an incorporated association and a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission. Arwabukarl has an eight-member all-Aboriginal Board that meets a minimum of four times a year. Miromaa has a four-member all-Aboriginal Committee that meets a minimum of four times a year.

Staffing: The CEO Daryn McKenny runs all aspects of the language, technology and knowledge components of the business. Staff funded through the language grants assist in the knowledge centre component as needed. Two volunteers also assist in the library.

Collection: The collection comes from donations and purchases and includes rare books, artworks and cultural artefacts of wood, stone and other materials.

One of the journals has been rated as extremely rare and other items have been assessed as extremely rare and valuable. Items stored at the centre have no environments controls, while extremely valuable items are stored in partnership with Newcastle Museum. The cataloguing and digitisation of the objects is an on-going process. Only a small portion, less than 1% is considered unprovenanced.

Engagement: The public can come in and research the collection. Miromaa collaborates with Newcastle Museum and the Lake Macquarie City Gallery.

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The word Miromaa is an Awabakal word meaning to stop from loss, referencing specifically stopping loss of language. Miromaa is about empowering Indigenous people to revitalise their language. Daryn McKenny started working on the Awabakal language more than 15 years ago. Awabakal (pronounced *Ar war ba karl*) is the language of the region that Miromaa works to revive. *Awaba* means flat surface. This is the name of the lake. *Kal* denotes the masculine. It literally means 'Man from the lake'.

Everything that Miromaa has learned in bringing back Awabakal language has created a useful model to enable other communities to conduct language work; Miromaa has developed language software tools and methods to enable Indigenous people to do the recovery work themselves. Miromaa is not just working on Awabakal. It now works with 150 languages and has been instrumental in supporting many Indigenous language groups internationally to revive their languages, including 75 Native American groups. Tribal Youth Ambassador Jayden Lim, Promo Tribe, acknowledged Daryn McKenny and Miromaa in her acceptance speech when her work was recognised by US former First Lady Michelle Obama in the White House in November 2016.

Miromaa also convenes the national language conference - Pullima. The conference is in Cairns in October 2017.

"To revitalise culture is to learn how to make the tools from the stones again and to understand the language used," Daryn says. "For example, a stone can be used to grind seeds, it can be used to cut meat. But these are things. You can throw it away or it is not used anymore but for words, we have only got the one word for that, and we need to revitalise and preserve that. There is the Awabakal word for stone -thunerong. To preserve this and to understand and know this, is about the practice of culture. The knowledge too, is what's important, not just the object."

Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre Aboriginal Corporation



Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre Aboriginal Corporation Collection Area and Display Area

(Data from survey, roundtable and exhibition booklet)

www.yarkuwa.com.au

www.facebook.com/YarkuwaIndigenousKnowledgeCentre

www.mgns.wa.gov.au/organisations/yarkuwa-indigenous-knowledge-centre-aboriginal-corporation

Location and Venue: Has been in current venue for 1 year, currently leased for three years with the option of a further three years.

Opening hours: 9-5 weekdays and by appointment. Closed for Sorry Business.

Visitation: 1665 per annum (with temporary exhibition program). People find out about Yarkuwa through local knowledge and referrals; including from Visitors Information Centre; Southwest arts and council.

Governance: Aboriginal not for profit corporation incorporated with ORIC; Seven member all Aboriginal Board meets 4x per year.

Staffing: Full time manager and admin person (5 days per week). Volunteers to catalogue archival material.

Collection: The Yarkuwa Collection has 250 objects. It was a gift to the centre through donations, council, visitor centres and local historical society.

There has been no significance assessment and it would be beneficial. There are some historical and irreplaceable objects, such as a 100-year-old basket. Yarkuwa is developing a digital archive of the collection. Most items are behind glass but not climate controlled. Stone artefacts are displayed on open stands. Stored items are kept in archival boxes. 10% unprovenanced but come from local collections, so preference would be to keep them.

Engagement: Undertakes language workshops, performance development workshops; community access programs eg adult learner week; plus, an annual festival week Wamba Wamba Perrepa Perrepa that engages with schools around language, culture and activities.

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Collaborates through ACHAA as well as South East Arts and the Visitors Centre. Participates in local arts committee, as well as being chair of ACHAA.

Yarkuwa is a Wamba Wamba word meaning to seek and search for over long distances. The Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre was established in 2003 followed by a process of community development. In about 2000 many people were involved in the Arts and Cultural practice subject at TAFE. It grew out of the local TAFE where members of the Aboriginal community had done study and gathered information from state archives, Melbourne library and mission records. They wanted to have a place to keep the historical records and materials they had found. They mounted a photographic exhibition about the local Deniliquin Community which included photographs submitted by community members and local families. It was a great success. From this they came up with the idea to have a Knowledge centre, for local families, traditional owners and Aboriginal people to show connection to country. As the opportunity arose, they took them and now the Centre employs 10 people. The Centre is a space for new ideas. It has a library and conducts workshops including language and weaving projects. The Centre has partnerships with universities and is known in Deniliquin and is an important participant in the wider community.

Yarkuwa has worked on a range of cultural and environmental projects over the years. It is currently in its third location and examining issues around succession and sustainability. “We recognise the importance of building partnerships and have found recent success in linking with the local arts community,” Yarkuwa Manager David Crew says. “This includes consideration of a local arts precinct within the town. While there is recognition of the importance of Aboriginal culture and heritage within any arts and tourism space there remain limited opportunities for building capacity of members of our local community to take on this role in this sector.

“We need better targeted investment in building local capacity and providing meaningful and sustained employment within the sector as well as the development of local product and engagement of members of the community.”

Yarkuwa’s work in culture, language, arts and heritage is one of three key areas of operation for the organisation. The focus in this area is to build on local initiatives which have included conducting fibrecraft and weaving workshops, mental health art recovery projects, and language development work.

The approach has been to create connections across the community through performance works. Each year Yarkuwa celebrates Wamba Wamba Perrepa Perrepa Cultural Week, a celebration of local traditional culture. Yarkuwa maintains principles of inclusiveness, community development and social justice.

Yarkuwa objectives are:

- To collate and maintain cultural, heritage and environment information as it relates to the Wamba Wamba and Perrepa Perrepa country
- To provide an education service to the wider community including schools and community groups

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- To engage in negotiations with Local, State, Federal and other agencies on matters relating to culture, heritage and the environment
- To provide the means for members to develop skills that will allow them to be involved in the provision of education and research services
- To provide a centre to facilitate the transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next
- To acquire and hold title to land and water for the purposes of culture and heritage, environment, education, conservation, social and economic development.

Culture, heritage and environmental projects have been undertaken to strengthen connections between government agencies, land managers and the local Aboriginal community and improve the condition of local environmental areas. Projects have included an Asset Based Community Development project for the NSW Environmental Trust, Protecting Our Places projects for North Deniliquin State Forest, North Deniliquin Flats, and Deniliquin Island Sanctuary and Aljoes Creek, Deniliquin Lagoon Rehabilitation project and the Werai Reserve Indigenous Protected Area consultation project.

Yarkuwa also undertakes cultural heritage impact assessments and hosts an Aboriginal Local Landcare Coordinator to work across the Murray River Region.

The organisation's work has included connecting members of the community to the services they need, developing effective engagement strategies across many social and community areas including health, education and justice, and building awareness through recording personal stories.

Since 2009 Yarkuwa has been actively engaged with the NSW Government through exploring issues faced by local Aboriginal carers and currently sits on the Aboriginal Working Group to the NSW Aboriginal Carers Strategy.

Also since 2009 Yarkuwa has worked with the Federal Government to deliver the Community Support Service (later called the Indigenous Community Links programme), the Parental and Community Engagement program supporting education and more recently the Indigenous Advancement Strategy through an Indigenous Engagement Program, Sport Development Program and Sports Grants Program.

In 2012 Yarkuwa entered a research partnership with Macquarie University revisiting geographic data collected in 1965 and documenting local family experiences with social and economic changes over the following 50 years.

Aboriginal artist initiatives x 10

Boolarng Nangamai Aboriginal Art & Culture Studio (BNAACS)

Steve Miller and BNAACS CEO Kelli Ryan write:

Formed from students of a TAFE art program by their teacher Kelli Ryan, Boolarng Nangamai was for 15 years the pace setter for Aboriginal visual arts engagement and production in NSW. It Operated from sheds that foundering artists and Kelli site specific built in an industrial estate in Gerringong. The BN team adopted an enterprise approach from day one, taking on commissions and learning traditional skills such as weaving and canoe making that it would then pass on to other communities. For a solid 10 years Boolarng Nangamai Aboriginal Art & Culture Studio had a team of 30 artist sub contract and facilitate workshops across the nation. This included two overseas Indigenous cultural exchanges to France and Canada. BNAACS artists produced major permanent exhibitions such as Cadigal Place for the Historic Houses Trust (Now Sydney Living Museums) and other work for Museum Contemporary Art and Australian Museum. In 2015 BNAACS planned to scale up and have a new premises but was met with on the ground politics in community and mainstream funding changes that impacted on its site closure. Boolarng Nangamai Aboriginal Corporation continues as an advocate body and support for artists nationally.

Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co operative

(Data from survey and exhibition booklet)

<https://www.boomalli.com.au/>

www.facebook.com/boomalligallery

www.mgnsw.org.au/organisations/boomalli-aboriginal-artists-co-operative

Location and Venue: Boomalli has been located in Flood Street, Leichhardt for 15 years and owns the venue

Opening Hours: Wednesday to Sunday 10am to 4pm (closed Monday and Tuesday)

Visitation: 5500 per annum. Visitors find out about Boomalli through word of mouth, the website and social media, Aboriginal and suburban media (radio and print) and art guides.

Income: funding: Create NSW, Indigenous Land Corporation, Australia Council, M&G NSW, Department of Family & Community Services, Copyright Agency and NAVA) sales of artworks and other shop sales, commissions/licensing

Governance: The Board of 7, including two non-Aboriginal Board Members meets 6-8 times per year. Non-Aboriginal Directors do not have voting rights and have expertise in such areas as finance and governance. The cooperative experienced financial stress prior to 2009 and Bronwyn Bancroft took on the role of senior strategist, a volunteer position for eight years.

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

Staffing: There are four staff:

- Cultural Co ordinator (5 days per week)
- Emerging Curator (5 days per week)
- 2 x gallery administration (3 days each)

With one casual staff member and one volunteer on weekends. Up to 10 Volunteers assist with archiving and inventory, scanning of archival photo collection and organizing stock/storage room. Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative was established in 1987 and so celebrates thirty years of existence in 2017. It is currently considering transitioning to an arts centre in terms of the definition that attracts funding from the Federal Government and is seeking legal advice. The initial response indicates this may be possible.

As the longest running co-operative for Aboriginal artists in NSW, Boomalli offers members a niche art market position, presenting about seven exhibitions a year. The co operative also runs workshops for members and stakeholders, presents artists talks and a local high school exhibition and develops licensing agreements for its artists.

The founding member artists Euphemia Bostock, Fiona Foley, Michael Riley (dec.), Tracey Moffatt, Jeffrey Samuels, Bronwyn Bancroft, Avril Quail, Fern Martens, Arone Meeks and Brenda L. Croft challenged preconceptions around urban based Aboriginal artists.

Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative's primary goal is to promote Aboriginal artists whose language groups exist within the NSW state boundaries. It supports, promotes, educates and protects copyright for members. Boomalli strives to improve access for Aboriginal artists from both regional and metropolitan NSW.

Boomalli has a current membership base of 50 artists. Approximately a third are emerging artists and more than half of the membership consists of regional artists.

Boomalli has key partnerships with The Euraba Paper Company, ACE North Coast and the Gumbaynggirr Artists Collective. Key partnerships in Sydney include the Museums of Applied Arts and Sciences, State Library of NSW, ACON, Microsoft, Australia Post, Barangaroo and others.

By charging only 33% commission, a higher income is returned to artists and is an integral component in ensuring their artistic growth and success.

Boomalli has a main gallery for major exhibitions and smaller front room galleries, which are used by Boomalli's artist members to mount and curate their own solo exhibitions.

In recent years, Boomalli has completely renovated the co-operative's premises including new toilets, a disabled toilet, new roof and the addition of solar panels and skylights (funding received from Indigenous Land Corporation). The gallery floor needs levelling.

Coomaditchie Aboriginal Corporation

(Data from field trip to the Illawarra)

www.coomaditchie.org.au

www.facebook.com/coomaditchie

Location and venue: Coomaditchie Aboriginal Corporation, in addition to a range of community services and caring for country in and around the Coomaditchie Reserve near Port Kembla, operates an art workshop space in a former dance hall on the reserve through a long-term arrangement with Wollongong Council.

Opening Hours: Open every day from 10 am

Visitation: More than 1000 per annum. People find out about Coomaditchie from the website and other Aboriginal organisations, as Coomaditchie well known for its art throughout Wollongong and the south coast. Once a year they host the Last Minute exhibition at their art workshop.

Income: sale of artworks, merchandise including children's books and postcards and art commissions. There is some funding.

Governance and staff: Coomaditchie is registered with the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission.

Sisters Lorraine Brown and Narelle Thomas are the chief artists and function as Chair and Deputy Chair for the organisation. There are three casual staff: an admin person, a book keeper and a homework hub co coordinator with volunteers for tutors.

While Coomaditchie produces works for sale, so there is no collection as such, there is a database of all the artworks produced.

Coomaditchie has plans to expand the building to include a gallery and other upgrades and improvements to windows, toilets, storerooms and ventilation.

Dunghutti Ngaku Aboriginal Art Gallery



Dunghutti Ngaku Aboriginal Art Gallery Interior

(Data from survey and exhibition booklet)

www.dnaag.com.au

www.facebook.com/dnaag.com.au

www.mgnsw.org.au/organisations/dunghutti-ngaku-aboriginal-art-gallery

Location and Venue: Nestled in parkland on the south side of Kempsey, Dunghutti Ngaku is housed alongside the Macleay Historical Society in the annex of the Visitor Information Centre designed by internationally renowned architect Glen Murcutt. It has occupied this venue for nine years through an MOU with Kempsey Shire Council. A bush tucker garden has been planted by the gallery co coordinator Jann Kesby.

Opening hours: 10am-4pm Tuesday-Sunday. Visitors find out about Dunghutti-Ngaku through social media, website, email, advertising and word of mouth.

Visitation: 2,617 in the past year

Income: In addition to sales of artworks and merchandise, the gallery is supported through the federal Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support Program.

Governance: DNAAG is a cultural service of Durri Aboriginal Corporation Medical Service and is a not for profit organisation. The gallery has its own committee of 12 that meets monthly.

Staffing: In addition to Jann as the fulltime staff member, two volunteers open the gallery, interact with customers who come into the gallery, process sales, maintain a clean working environment and close the gallery.

Collection: Jann is establishing a permanent collection of artworks, purchased off artists. It has yet to be assessed formerly for total value and significance, but each artwork is valued at its purchase price. There is a database for all artworks in the collection.

Engagement: In addition to a weaving demonstration in past year and touring works with the M&G

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NSW/ACHAA exhibition from our place, Dunghutti-Ngaku collaborates with other organisations including TAFE Wauchope, Slim Dusty Centre, National Parks & Wildlife and St. Aloysius College, Milsons Point. Artworks are presently touring NSW with Museums & Galleries of NSW/ACHHA exhibition.

Local school students often attend the Gallery to view and discuss artworks.

Dunghutti-Ngaku Aboriginal Art Gallery (DNAAG) is an in the Macleay Valley on the mid north coast of NSW. Established in the latter part of 2008 after lengthy consultation with the Aboriginal community, there was strong evidence that the artists of the area needed a professional space in which to showcase their works. The aim of the gallery is to showcase and market works of prominent established and emerging Aboriginal artists of the Dunghutti region and broader mid north coast area.

The gallery offers an opportunity for Aboriginal artists to exhibit their art works to local, interstate and international visitors onsite and via a web site. DNAAG offers works for sale by a number of highly renowned artists who are represented in major public and private collections as well as works from emerging artists living in the region.

There is a strong connection to the land evident in the artists' works. Dunghutti region stretches north of Port Macquarie through to Stuarts Point and up to Armidale on the tablelands covering saltwater and freshwater areas.

The objectives of the gallery are:

- Strengthen ties between Aboriginal and non-Indigenous members of the community
- To act as a conduit between business and the Aboriginal community
- To improve the quality and standard of living and sense of wellbeing for Aboriginal artists
- Provide an educational service to schools in the shire, metropolitan areas and broader community groups
- Maintain history and cultural heritage so that they can be passed down through generations
- To engage with local, state and federal funding agencies for continued support.

A strong connection with training centres in the area has enabled artists to gain skills and develop works of a high standard. The gallery also provides an opportunity to link Indigenous business development with Indigenous culture. The gallery manages a gift shop supporting small Indigenous business and partnerships throughout Australia.

Durri Aboriginal Corporation Medical Service was established in 1976. The name Durri means “to grow in good health” and was bestowed upon the organisation by members of the local Aboriginal community.

Giriwa Guruwanga Art Gallery – Ulladulla Aboriginal Land Council

(Data from survey)

www.facebook.com/ulladullaulalc

Location and Venue: Located at the Ulladulla Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) office off the Princess Highway in Ulladulla, Giriwa Guruwanga Art Gallery has been operating for one year, featuring artworks and products for sale created by local artists. The LALC owns the building which is in need of work, but the current Board and management do not want to spend money on it because of its cultural centre plans, considered to still be another 5-10 years away from starting development. The LALC also operates the Coomee Nulunga cultural trail which includes an Aboriginal camp and midden.

Opening hours: 8am-4 pm Monday to Friday or by appointment.

Visitation: 685 per annum from tours, schools and art sales. People find out about the gallery through signage; social media, information centre and Destination NSW website. There are some walk-ins for the street. It is not heavily promoted by choice as it is small.

Income: Commission work from local agencies brings in a percentage of work for the artists, as well as cross-promoting when there are trails. The LALC does not operate the gallery, workshops or tours to generate income as the primary goal. The goal is to educate and create cultural awareness. Core business is land management. The gallery is a community space where artists and craftspeople can display their work. Any income generated goes straight to the artist. The LALC conducts cultural tours on the Coomee Nulunga Trail. The small amount of income generated pays the tour guide's wages and for maintenance on the trail.

The LALC recently put in a submission with the Regional Cultural Fund to upgrade the culture trail. The trail has deteriorated. The totem poles and sculpture need replacing, and a boardwalk is necessary to stop erosion and to improve the appeal of the trail and make it more marketable as a tourism asset.

Governance: Giriwa Guruwanga Art Gallery is an initiative of the Ulladulla Aboriginal Land Council and has registered charity status. The seven-member all-Aboriginal Board meets four times per year.

Staff: Ulladulla LALC has a full time CEO and three staff: project manager; property manager; office manager. Project manager relatively new and role will include applying for other grants. There are 1-23 tours a fortnight and casual tour guides employed for 2-4 hours. The gallery is managed by LALC staff and artists. Gallery does not generate enough income to employ staff. Tourism qualifications would be desirable.

Collection: The Ulladulla LALC has about 100 objects on display – mainly weapons and shards from tools. Thousands of artefacts discovered in archaeological digs are in storage. The collection has been given to LALC through archaeological surveys; from the Australian Museum and gifts from collectors. Objects not on display are in storage boxes.

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

Engagement: Art workshops – five schools and preschool on regular basis, offer free on request to ensure culture is included in the curriculum. Also run workshops for NAIDOC and display children's art during NAIDOC. Also do Aboriginal readings and workshops with the library.

Gomeri gaaynggal Centre Art Studio and Gallery, Tamworth

Data from website:

www.newcastle.edu.au/research-and-innovation/centre/crs/mothers-and-babies/gomeri/about-us

www.facebook.com/gomeri.gaaynggal

Location: Hinkler Street Tamworth

Visitation: unknown

The Gomeri gaaynggal ('Babies from Gomeri lands') program works to improve the health outcomes and opportunities for Aboriginal women and their children.

An initiative of the University of Newcastle's Priority Research Centre of Reproductive Health, the ArtsHealth program has been underway since 2009, working in partnership with the Aboriginal communities of Tamworth and Walgett. The Gomeri gaaynggal program has its own centre in Tamworth that offers up clinical and office space for research, a crèche, working art studio, art gallery and outdoor space, including a fresh vegie patch. The Gomeri gaaynggal Centre is open to the public and regularly hosts events within the premises. It works collaboratively with a large number of health organisations and departments of the university.

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

Jambama Art Gallery, Casino

Data from website: www.jambama.com.au/ & www.facebook.com/jambamagallery

Location and Venue: Casino Industrial Estate. The Jambama Art Gallery is a purpose-built space opened in 2012, located in front of the Jambama Arts Centre workshop.

Visitation: Unknown

Opening hours: 9am–4pm Monday to Friday

Governance: The Jambama Art Gallery and Jambama Arts Centre are projects of Buyinbin Aboriginal Corporation, located in Casino NSW, Australia.

Buyinbin established the Jambama Art Shed with an arts and crafts program more than 10 years ago in a warehouse in the industrial estate in Casino, to provide a community based arts and crafts workshop, providing training in painting, sculpture, textiles, and more recently in arts management. Jambama Arts Centre has developed into a recognised hub for Aboriginal arts and cultural practice in Casino, with extension activities throughout the region.

Mehi Artists at Moree TAFE

www.countryartescapes.com.au/venue-artist-listing.php?mid=62

Location and Venue: at the Moree TAFE, the gallery is on the Mehi River side, quite close to the river, near Mary Brand Park.

Visitation: Unknown

Opening hours: 10am-3pm Monday to Thursday

Income is generated from artwork sales and workshops

This data was provided by Moree TAFE teacher and founder of the art group Elizabeth von Gavel:

Mehi Gallery and Studio was formed by a group of Aboriginal students from the Moree Campus, TAFE NSW New England Institute. The local community is situated on the land of the Gamilaroi or Gamilaraay people. The founders believe that they have a story to tell about their life growing up in Moree and want the opportunity to 'tell their side of the story' by showcasing unique artworks and designs.

Artworks use traditional and contemporary Aboriginal concepts, designs and techniques. The work has evolved from the local environment, the rivers, the bush and the people and uses many recycled and found materials.

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

The gallery sells paintings, mosaics, ceramics, screen-printed fabrics, corporate furniture, sculptures, gift cards, engraved pens and glassware, carvings and fashion accessories. Mehi has done a number of commissioned works for private individuals, local community organisations and private businesses.

Ngemba Wailwan artists

Data from: www.rivertrails.com.au/attraction/ngemba-wailwan-artists-warren/

The Ngemba Wailwan art group is Indigenous artists who gather to make artworks in Warren in Western NSW. The group's name comes from the Ngemba Wailwan people who inhabited the area between Gilgandra and Brewarrina but centred particularly on Warren and the Macquarie Marshes, creating artworks that were carved into trees and ground. The Wailwan artists produce works inspired by these carvings.

It is a faithful rendition of each artist's totemic clan symbol and the legendary glyphs of their ancestors. Produced in quality oils on heavy linen canvas the work has the feel of rich leather.

The group's conception began with the development of the Regional Indigenous Cultural Development Officer (RICDO) Scheme which runs in the five shire that Outback Arts services.

The Window on the Wetlands Centre in Warren has artworks developed by the group on permanent display. In front of the building are several 'totem' poles which were painted by the group and other members of the Aboriginal community in Warren.

WUPA@Wanaruah

Data from website: www.wupa.com.au

Wupa is a Wanaruah word meaning to make or to paint. Organised by the Ungooroo Aboriginal Corporation of Singleton, WUPA@Wanaruah is an art trail of local Aboriginal artists that is displayed through the wineries and accommodation venues of the Hunter Valley. In 2017-18 it will run from November until the end of May.

Aboriginal Museums x 3

Brewarrina Aboriginal Cultural Museum



Brewarrina Aboriginal Cultural Museum Exterior and Display Area

From *Keeping places and beyond: building cultural futures in NSW a reader*, 2011, produced by M&G NSW (various authors) and additional from Steve Miller:

www.mgnsw.org.au/media/uploads/files/keeping_places_and_beyondnew2.pdf

The Brewarrina Aboriginal Cultural Museum has won architectural awards for its unique construction, a series of concrete domes that represent gunyas that appear to merge with the landscape and provide a natural climate control for its cultural objects. It is uniquely located alongside the famous Brewarrina fish traps of the Barwon River, one of the oldest man-made structures in the world and are state and national heritage listed.

The museum is an Aboriginal organisation under the Cooperatives Act and is currently governed by a trusteeship temporarily held by the Brewarrina Business Centre though this is going through change. The museum is on Crown land. Former Brewarrina resident and community cultural development consultant Lily Shearer is heading an effort to set up a new legal entity that can manage the cultural museum. In 2015 and 2017, Lily has staged the Festival of Baiame's Ngunnhu on Brewarrina including the museum and is due to hold the three-week event in 2018 in association with the back to Brewarrina and Old Mission Elders Gathering.

Despite the significance of the fish traps and the creative uniqueness of the museum and its cultural presentations, the museum has struggled as a venture and opened and closed several times.

Henry Bolt Museum (Mindaribba Aboriginal Land Council)



Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council Exterior and Interior

(Data from field trip to the Hunter Valley)

The Henry Bolt Museum at the Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council in the Hunter Valley is problematic. While the LALC has had at best only an acting ceo for several years whose pre-occupation has been the core services of the organisations, the museum has been neglected. Its collection has been donated from the Australian Museum, NSWALC, excavations for construction and individuals but without thought to a collecting policy, so collecting has been ad hoc.

Consequently, the display material carries little or no labelling, some objects appear to have come from other communities and states and there is little organisational memory of the origins of individual pieces in the collection.

The collection is estimated to be about 1000 items. Some of it has been reburied and marked as such, like time capsules. Managing the collection is difficult. It's hard to find Aboriginal people who can read archaeology report and do cultural education as well. The museum itself needs maintenance. For instance, there is a leak at the door and the lighting is not working. This has interrupted the regular school visits. While the museum is in need on maintenance, it still has a steady flow of people coming through, and there is a growing interest by the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community to use the facilities and to use the centre as a venue.

On average, School visits are 20 Indigenous and non-Indigenous students a fortnight, which equates to about 520 a year. The LALC has a cultural heritage officer who might make Johnny cakes and Aboriginal students from the local school who perform/dance for a gold coin donation. The museum does not market itself because it is not set up for regular visits.

They allow general visitors as they did before, but there is more work to be done to make the place acceptable. They are not open on the weekend. In the past, there was an idea to have a café and to open the museum, but this is not a priority.

Members have set up a coffee club and a local Wonnarua person taught weaving to the group. There was an exhibition of the weavings. Then they put on an art exhibition. The art exhibition also involved youth and family to showcase their learnings.

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

A didgeridoo program is starting. Elders and young people also learn to paint and play didgeridoo. On average, 15 people go into one class. The LALC is also aiming to teach Wonnarua language. Also, there are dance classes which are taught by an Elder.

Overall there are about 11,500 Aboriginal people in the area. The LALC supports them whether they are or not. Another important program is the Many Waters Healing run with FACS funding. It is a program for family and youth cares. There are a lot of grandparent carers. They come into the centre for an hour, put on music and relax. Within the wider community, Mindaribba is a point of reference for Indigenous engagement. Mindaribba is often asked to give feedback on projects. For instance, they are consulted by the council about projects like the bicentenary of Maitland. Other heritage places consult them as well on the local history and where items should be repatriation and returned.

Minjungbal Museum



Minjungbal Museum Display

(Data from roundtable participation)

www.facebook.com/MinjungbalMuseum

www.mgnsw.org.au/organisations/minjungbal-museum

www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/things-to-do/visitor-centres/minjungbal-aboriginal-cultural-centre

Opening times 10am to 3pm, Monday to Thursday. The Tweed Heads Historic Site, where the centre is located is always open. There is a bora ground and a nature trail that leads to walkway on the Tweed River.

Minjungbal Museum was officially opened in 1984. The museum is on a sacred site and the Aboriginal community wanted their own people to be there to look after it. Part of this vision was to have a keeping place, so local artefacts and sacred objects could be returned to community for safe keeping. In an area with such high devolvement and activity, it was considered essential to protect these objects for future generations. Cultural objects and artefacts from the old Tweed River Museum were returned once storage was built.

The Tweed Aboriginal Cooperative funds the centre independent of grants and provides the salary for the Manager Mleeka Hart who originally volunteered to re-open the centre after completing a Bachelor of Arts in Indigenous Knowledge Systems. The grounds are cared for through work for the dole scheme. Cultural objects and artefacts from the old Tweed River Museum were returned once storage was built. Meeting rooms and offices were also added, and these are rented to other Aboriginal organisations. Government meetings are also held there. The museum provides for education for schools and the wider community. The overall venue including the parklands provides a place to come and associate and identify. The Co-op has a liquor license for the site so it can be hired for functions and is looking to have community funeral wakes there as funerals are costly. Mleeka does tours and a local dance group practises on the bora ground adjoining the museum every Saturday.

Aboriginal Keeping Places x 10

Ashford Local Aboriginal Land Council

www.australianmuseum.net.au/movie/ashford-keeping-place

www.theland.com.au/story/4765479/open-day-ashford-local-aboriginal-land-council/#slide=3

Baradine Local Aboriginal Land Council

www.visitnsw.com/destinations/country-nsw/warrumbungle-area/attractions/baradine-local-aboriginal-land-council-and-keeping-place

Narromine Local Aboriginal Land Council Keeping Place

www.narromine.nsw.gov.au/visit/narromine-aboriginal-keeping-place

Cumbo Gunnerah Keeping Place Red Chief Local Aboriginal Land Council (Gunnedah)

www.visitgunnedah.com.au/index.php/play/land-of-the-kamilaroi

Tibooburra Local Aboriginal Land Council

www.mgnsw.org.au/organisations/tibooburra-lalc-keeping-place

Batahbah Aboriginal Land Council



Batahbah Aboriginal Land Council exterior

Steve Miller writes:

Batahbah LALC has previously been visited by M&G NSW but CEO Mick Green was unavailable during the Hunter Valley field trip for this report. Batahbah's site consists of several hut like building used for offices. One of these huts contains its keeping place which has showcases featuring cultural objects, while the walls have been decorated with art by local artists. It is mainly used by the community and for school visits.

Monaroo Bobberrer Gudu Keeping Place at Jigamy Farm (Eden)



Monaroo Bobberrer Gudu Keeping Place Exterior

Steve Miller writes:

While Monaroo Bobberrer Gudu is included in this section because it has the nomenclature of a Keeping Place but in reality, its scale, design and operation is more like an Aboriginal Cultural Centre. It has been built by the Aboriginal community of Eden on land returned to them under the vision of Uncle Pastor Ossie Cruse, brick by brick, often recruiting Aboriginal trainees in TAFE building courses.

The complex houses a large hall suitable for conventions/meetings and receptions with a commercial kitchen, office space for the Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council and gallery space for some of its collection of cultural objects. The centre is on land adjoining Jigamy Farm, a commercial oyster farm managed by the Two-Fold Aboriginal Corporation, an adjunct to the Eden LALC.

The Keeping Place complex has existed for many years but has not technically been open beyond its community and occasional hire use due the need for a council built road to provide access. The road has now been built and the centre is increasing its activity. Visitors are welcome, and it is the departure point for the Bundian Way, a tourism drive adventure following a traditional route over the mountains and including the opportunity to visit an Aboriginal art gallery associated with Eden LALC in the small village of Prospect.

In the past year with the support of South East Regional Arts Monaroo Bobberrer Gudu has hosted an Aboriginal Writers Festival and again with SE Regional Arts it will host an Aboriginal cultural festival in 2018.

In 2016, Museums & Galleries of NSW awarded its first IMAGinE Award for Outstanding Contribution to NSW Aboriginal Culture to Uncle Ossie Cruse.

www.yuin-monaro.mgoals.com.au/2015/06/09/culture/

www.abc.net.au/local/photos/2015/07/09/4270480.htm

www.bundianway.com.au/The_Gateway.htm

Goondee Keeping Place

Steve Miller writes:

Tom Barker, son of the late Roy and June Barker, continues to create cultural artefacts at their Lightning Ridge home and maintain the display area. Visitor can drop in though opening hours can vary.

Wagonga Local Aboriginal Land Council

www.wlalc.com.au

Location and Venue: The Wagonga lalc has owned and operated from its premises for 33yrs

Opening hours: The office is open 9am to 6pm Monday to Friday

Visitation: About 200 per annum

Income: Training Facility and Community Centre

Governance: Wagonga LALC is a registered incorporated organization under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act of 1983 and is registered with the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission. The seven member all Aboriginal Board meets at least monthly.

Staffing: There is a fulltime CEO and an administrative assistant three days per week plus casual site officers as required. Some site work is handled by volunteers and members also volunteer to deliver culture and heritage programming to the local school.

Collection: Some artefacts are held in the LALC office, but the CEO reports members also have private collections in their homes, in part because there are no climate controlled conditions for storage on site. The website also refers to the Yuin Cultural Heritage Trail and sites of significance.

Engagement: The community has been engaged through a 26-week Language Course for Aboriginal Owners, and a Sites Identification and Management Course for 12 members of the LALC.

Wurrumbungle Shire Council/Coonabarabran Keeping Place

www.ourmob.org.au/coonabarabran-keeping-place/

Aboriginal Language & Culture Nests x 5

Steve Miller writes:

The Aboriginal Language & Culture Nests are referenced here because while to date they have been focused on language delivery programs, there have been indications of their interest and intention to establish keeping places at each coordination centre. The following statement about the operation of the Language & Culture Nests was approved by Director, Aboriginal Education and Community Engagement with the Department of Education Mary Senj for inclusion in this report and is drawn from the DET website:

www.education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/aec/language-culture-and-communities

OCHRE recognises Aboriginal languages and cultures as a unique component of Australia's heritage. It is a fundamental element of Aboriginal culture which reaffirms Aboriginal identity, spirituality and connection to Country. The establishment of Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests is a key initiative under OCHRE. OCHRE commits to the establishment of five initial Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests across the State.

An Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest is a network of communities bound together by their connection through an Aboriginal Language. The Nests provide communities with opportunities to revitalise, reclaim and maintain their traditional languages and will involve the participation of communities linking with schools, TAFE NSW, universities and other community language programs or groups.

Each Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest is aligned to a 'base' school which receives an annual allocation of funding for administrative support and the employment of Aboriginal Language tutors for schools within the Nest perimeters.

Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests are designed to provide a continuous learning pathway for Aboriginal students. The language skills and knowledge of Aboriginal language and culture holders and /or speakers from local Aboriginal communities is recognised as critical to the continuing development and support of teaching and learning in the Nests.

The Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest initiative is being led by the Department of Education in partnership with the NSW Aboriginal Educational Consultative Group Inc. (AECG), the peak advisory group on Aboriginal Education in NSW. The nests are:

- **Bundjalung Language and culture nest**
- **Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay/Youwaalayaay language and culture nest**
- **Gumbaynggirr Language and culture nest**
- **North West Wiradjuri Language and Culture Nest**
- **Paakantji/Baakantji Language and culture nest**

Other x 6

Dharriwaa Elders Group

(Data from survey, roundtable participation and exhibition booklet)

www.dharriwaaeldersgroup.org.au

Location and Venue: Has operated 10 yards from its current venue through lease arrangement in an accessible main street location. DEG has ambitions to renovate to extend exhibition space, as well as external renovations and painting, install disabled toilets, solar system and plumbing for tank water.

Opening hours: Open 9am–1pm Monday to Friday or by appointment. School bookings and group bookings are by appointment.

Visitation: 700 per annum. Visitors find out about DEG from its website, Walgett Visitor Information Centre, recommendation, Twitter, networks. DEG asks that visitors to Walgett pay their respects to Elders by notifying and preferably visiting the Elders Group to be welcomed when they visit Walgett. Visitation can be affected if there is a site trip or funeral or if the venue is understaffed. It can increase if the Aboriginal community organises large events.

Income: providing advice and government-funded services e.g. Aged Care Social Support and related Transport. Funding sources have included Regional Arts NSW, M&G NSW, Department of Health, Department of Communications and the Arts, Department of Environment and Heritage, Department of Education and Training, NSW Department of State and Regional Development, NSW Environmental Trust and ATSIC.

Governance: DEG is an Incorporated Association, registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission. The board meets at least 11 times per year. There are 11 Board Members, one of them is non-Aboriginal (specific skills from non-Full Member).

Staffing: There is a casual Project Manager employed as required plus 2 Elder Support Officers who work Monday to Friday 9am to 1pm. The Project Manager often volunteers when funding is tight.

Collection: The collection was acquired through the work of the organisation. Some objects were acquired under AHIP permits (ie rescued). Some objects were donated. The collection is in air-conditioned storage consisting of shelving and boxes with location numbering. DEG considers there are some issues with sunlight, insects and mice.

There are issues of digital storage. DEG has a large digital collection and concerns regarding electronic storage space noting that the server has finite space that is not capable of supporting a growing collection. Responsible data security requires overnight off-site storage however this is not technically possible yet due to limitations of the internet service in Walgett.

The DEG uses the museum cataloguing software MOSAiC to organise and describe its collection. More than 400 MOSAiC records exist for DEG collection items, representing perhaps half of the DEG collection. Half of these records are for published material the other half for objects. The database is

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used in-house only and is not searchable by the public. The DEG is employing two archivists from Melbourne University in November 2017 to continue its cataloguing effort.

The DEG has a Cultural Values Register containing video, photographic and text documentation of significance of places in the region of interest to Walgett Elders. This is created in Drupal and would benefit from development or export to enhanced Drupal CMS.

DEG has collaborated with the Indigenous Unit of State Library of NSW (in 2016 with the help of a collections documentation grant from Museums & Galleries of NSW, devolved from Arts NSW) and University of New England Heritage Centre on the management and interpretation of its collection since 2004.

In August 2016 staff from State Library of NSW Indigenous Unit visited DEG and wrote in their report:

1. Composition of collections

During the site visit, Ronald Briggs and Nathan Sentence deemed several items within the Dharriwaa collection to be particularly significant because of their historic and/or spiritual value and because of their relationship to the local area and its history and culture as well as the materials' potential for research.

The DEG collection is comprised of the following material:

1.1. Registry of sites

This database collection is a detailed description and commentary on Aboriginal sites in the Walgett region compiled by DEG. Accompanying these descriptions are photographs and video interviews providing context on the sites' cultural and historic significance.

1.2. Photographic archive

The collection includes photographic documentation of people, places and events from 1998 to the present. The extent of the digital collection is over 50,000 photos which equates to about 108 gigabits of data. This collection documents contemporary life in Walgett and is a well-used resource for family and social history research.

1.3. Artefacts

The DEG centre has a number of artefacts and artworks in its collection that are mostly on display. While these artefacts have an aesthetic value, many have cultural and historic value because prominent community Elders and members have created or took part in creating them. The artefacts also represent the material culture of the local community and as such need to be preserved as part of local history.

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Display cases showing hand crafted implements.

1.4. Funeral ephemera

The DEG has created and collected ephemera relating the funerals of local Aboriginal community members. These are family-approved documents detailing the family and life of the deceased and are not available online. This collection can be a useful resource for future family history research for community members and external family history researchers.

1.5. Complete set of the Yundiboo magazine produced by the Dharriwaa Elders Group

The DEG has a complete set of the Yundiboo in digital (edited and un-edited) and physical format. This magazine is produced by the DEG and features detailed accounts of the lives and careers of many members of the DEG. It also provided updates and information about people and events relating to the DEG and the Walgett region thus it is a resource for future for research.

1.6. Elders advocacy to government (listed)

Engagement and collaboration: DEG collaborates locally with Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service, Walgett LALC, Walgett Council and other services. Valued collaborators include Gilbert + Tobin Lawyers, Ashursts lawyers, NSW Environmental Defenders Office, NSW Legal Aid, Murray Darling Basin Authority Aboriginal Unit, SL NSW Indigenous Unit, Australian Museum, ACHAA members. In 2015 DEG formalised a multi-faculty partnership with University of NSW, Yuwaya Ngarrali.

'Yuwaya Ngarrali' means 'vision' in the Yuwaalaraay/Gamilaraay language of the Walgett region. Our vision is that the Dharriwaa Elders Group will lead a collaboration with UNSW and others to grow our individual and community strengths and assets. We aim to restore a robust belonging to thriving families, community and country, while making our place in the nation and sharing our learning with other communities.

Based on almost two decades of supporting Walgett Elders to work for their community's development, the Dharriwaa Elders Group ("DEG") is convinced that the solutions lie in Aboriginal Community Control and evidence-based holistic approaches grown from the combined skills and experience of Aboriginal Elders who have driven their community's progress over their lifetimes. DEG is working for the wellbeing of people and their Country and over the years has reached out to scientists, lawyers, mediamakers and academics to join this effort.

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DEG has a delegate on Walgett Gamilaraay Aboriginal Community Working Party, and has chaired it and provided its secretariat for many years in the past. Delegates have an ex-officio role on Narran Lakes Co-Management Committee. In the past DEG has also shared directors and chairs with the LALC, ATSIC and AECG.

The Dharriwaa Elders Group over the years has implemented programs in the schools (primary & High School) with families, Elders, provided community inductions for professionals working in Walgett, provided focus group advice, provided advocacy supports for Elders with governments and others. Has produced 4 exhibitions and published 11 years of monthly magazines, produced video resources and other educational materials, provided a Yuwaalaraay / Gamilaraay language program, etc.

DEG is active in the community. It offers this sample week of activities (11 – 16 September 2017):

- provided a base to the Primary Health Network's Walgett Aboriginal Hub;
- provided a daily Elders Centre and Elders transport and Social Support;
- hosted an Elders Knowledge Sharing trip to sites on Country
- hosted an evening talk in the Walgett High School's Community Hub re drugs & alcohol program models
- began to organize how the Yuwaalaraay nation will respond to a request from a journalist to write a book about the life and work of Katie Langloh Parker (an extremely highly significant figure in Yuwaalaraay culture)
- conducted a field trip to a Reserve on country with the aim of taking on the Trust management for the purpose of providing a base in the future for DEG's successful Youth and Elders Camps
- linked up landholders with an ecologist undertaking an important koala survey
- made a submission in partnership with Walgett Shire Council to Stronger Country Communities for the Upgrade of the Walgett Cemetery; attended and documented the Walgett Rugby League Knockout
- Negotiated a video project with the Walgett Community College for Elders to collaborate creatively with students

Dharriwaa Elders Group (DEG) supports Elders to engage with community and other stakeholders, manage Aboriginal cultural business and work for Walgett's development.

The association of Aboriginal Elders was formed in November 2000 as an offshoot of the Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service, after Elders had worked together on cultural community development projects since 1998. There was an urgency to protect cultural knowledge and connection to land. They want to pass on the knowledge to future generations and to help people belong to the community. It was about identity and belonging as well as community development. There was some initial work with ancestral remains. There is lots of work to be done to protect the Aboriginal Cultural

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Values of Walgett as there are many land clearing pressures from broad scale crop farmers and opal miners and many water issues due to irrigation.

There is little in Walgett for young people to do. The Elders wanted to connect with the youth and show the kids how important language and culture was. The foundation of the group was to improve intergenerational relationships. Healing and community development are also central. DEG considers itself an asset to the Government, through its protection of indigenous lore and knowledge.

DEG took its name from the sacred Narran Lakes site: Dharriwaa meaning common meeting place. Full members are Aboriginal people over 60 who live in Walgett.

The Dharriwaa Elders Group provides a cultural centre from which it offers a keeping place, collection and exhibitions. The group has extensive experience providing a governance framework for responsible cultural management, and delivering projects to promote and pass on Walgett's Aboriginal cultural values.

This experience, supported by a skilled network of goodwill is varied and rich, but has been limited by the extent of government support. Successful projects have included:

- Providing a safe and comfortable meeting place for Elders and their guests.
- Recording Elders and establishing a community cultural values database and archive
- Developing and conducting Elders' school programs
- Conducting family, community and cultural belonging healing activities including a series of week-long Youth and Elders camps
- Publishing a monthly magazine for 11 years providing on-the-job training for Walgett Aboriginal men and women
- Managing a cultural collection and keeping place Advocating for community leadership to drive community development and facilitating collaboration and partnerships
- Advocating for Elders in land and water management
- Developing policy and other skills
- Providing community induction learnings for professionals
- Producing educational resources using print, video, on-line mediums
- Supporting the entrepreneurial capacity of Walgett Aboriginal people and organisations.

Current concerns are the quality of water and flows of Walgett's rivers and groundwaters, protecting important places from uncontrolled opal mining, mentoring future Elders and building upon the hard-won resources achieved by Elders who have gone before.

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DEG has recently negotiated a partnership with the University of NSW, and, in response to mounting community concern for the community's unwell, is working in partnership with the Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service to develop a framework for managing social and emotional wellbeing.

DEG's most recent project used a Remote Piloted Aerial System (RPAS) which flew 110 metres high to survey two "islands" on the Barwon River near Walgett. The photos taken were stitched together to create high resolution geo referenced maps which DEG uploaded into its GIS system and combined with results of a ground survey. This exercise assisted DEG to learn how to use the best available tools at its disposal to keep an eye on places of importance to Elders and the community, collect evidence of the significance of these places, and assist the Walgett Aboriginal community to maintain its rich Aboriginal cultural values.

Finally, the Dharriwaa Elders requested this message be included in this report:

"We ask that Dharriwaa Elders Group be recognised for the role it plays to maintain Aboriginal Cultural Values in Walgett and that it and similar organisations offer lifelong learning, community-led and culturally-led solutions for wellbeing and economic development of their communities and regions.

We ask that Councils, NSW and Commonwealth agencies recognise the contributions DEG has made to Walgett and the region, and actively seek to support and negotiate with DEG during development of policy that will impact our community."

Euraba Paper Company

Data from website: www.eurabapaper.com.au/

Euraba Artists and Papermakers is an Aboriginal artists' collective based in Boggabilla, in the cotton belt of north-western NSW, Australia. It is owned and operated by the Goomerai people of Toomelah of the region, and has been making paper by hand since 1998. Euraba's paper and art are unique. It is made from local materials and pigments in a remote part of Australia, by a small community with strong Goomerai cultural traditions. Euraba was founded on the artistic skills of nine senior Goomerai women, who commenced art classes in 1996 at the Boggabilla TAFE and became Euraba's first lead artists.

Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co operative

Data from website: www.muurrbay.org.au

Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative is a leading regional language centre that provides strategic support to revitalise the languages of seven Aboriginal communities, of central to north of NSW. We work closely with Elders, local language, culture and educational organisations to conduct research, publish accessible grammar-dictionaries and develop engaging education courses and resources.

Muurrbay began in 1986, when Gumbaynggirr Elders, particularly Aunty Maggie Morris, joined together to revive their language with the support of linguist, Brother Steve Morelli. They accessed old recordings of the language, analysed its grammar and produced the first Gumbaynggirr dictionary-grammar. Gumbaynggirr language classes began in 1997 and many graduates have gone on to teach Gumbaynggirr in schools and community groups.

In 2004 Muurrbay expanded to become a regional language centre, supporting a further six languages. Strategic support in project planning, linguistics, IT and teaching expertise, has assisted language revival in several communities by publishing dictionary-grammars, developing teaching resources, employing language workers and delivering community based language workshops and accredited courses.

Muurrbay publishes a wide range of resources on Aboriginal language and culture. In-depth research, community consultation and peer review ensure high standards are maintained:

- Dictionary-grammars for seven languages provide a strong foundation for language revitalisation and make linguistic research more accessible.
- A handbook of Aboriginal languages of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, a ground-breaking reference work.
- Language teaching resources, Elders' stories in books, DVDs and CDs, and comparative linguistic research on the Gumbaynggirr dialects.
- Online language resources, such as dictionaries and websites to support language learning.
- To be published in 2016: Gumbaynggirr Collected Stories and A comparative linguistic analysis of Gumbaynggirr Dreaming stories in three dialects: Nymboidan, Northern and Southern.

Muurrbay has four main activities: supporting the revival of the Gumbaynggirr Language, auspicing Many Rivers Aboriginal Language Centre (a regional language centre activity), publishing Aboriginal language materials and providing a community centre for all language and cultural activities, including computer and internet access and administrative support.

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Mutawinji Aboriginal Cultural Centre/Visitor Centre

National Parks & Wildlife occasionally operates a cultural facility as part of co management of a National Park. Mutawinji is probably the most notable example due to the cultural significance of the site: <http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/things-to-do/visitor-centres/mutawintji-visitor-centre>

The Mutawinji Cultural Centre was successful in 2016-17 to obtain an M&G NSW Building Assessment grant.

North Sydney Heritage Office



North Sydney Heritage Office

The North Sydney Heritage Office's primary function is to ensure the conservation, protection and documentation of Aboriginal sites including rock carvings throughout the North Sydney regional covering several council areas. The office has a small exhibition area which is tailored to the delivery of a specific education program for schools. There is also a computer lab for corporate cultural awareness program delivery and occasional hire.

www.mgnsw.org.au/organisations/north-sydney-heritage-centre

Wiradjuri Study Centre



Wiradjuri Study Centre Exterior

The Wiradjuri Study Centre at Condobolin is a purpose-built structure, an outcome of an agreement with the local Aboriginal Community and a gold mining corporation. Strictly speaking, it's primary focus is in course delivery, but it has an art shop and occasional showings from a local Aboriginal art group. Numerous difficulties in governance and the building including OH&S issues inhibited progress of the centre for some time after it first opened but appear to be resolved now.

<http://www.wiradjuricondocorp.com/pageview.php?pid=1#sub10>

Regional Public Galleries and Museums

(Numerous – 2 examples provided)

Steve Miller writes:

Many regional public galleries and public and volunteer museums have developed relationships with their local Aboriginal community where it fits their exhibition and program development. Rarely, an Aboriginal community member may sit on a Board or reference committee. Frequently, where no local Aboriginal owned cultural venue exists, the local museum will include a display referencing the local cultural connections, produced in consultation with the community. Sometimes heritage and contemporary art exhibitions have been produced with support and encouragement from Regional Arts, Museums & Galleries of NSW, local council Aboriginal liaison officer, local Aboriginal Land Councils and tertiary institutions such as regional Universities and TAFE's. While too broad to list all of these engagements here, two examples, one each from a public gallery and public museum, deserve noting.

Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery

(Data from field trip interview with Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery director Debbie Abraham and artist, independent Indigenous curator and member of the Aboriginal Reference Group Donna Biles Fernando)

The Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery plays a key role in supporting cultural practice throughout the region. The gallery recognises that a specific feature of that role is acknowledging and engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander community as the First Peoples, and being able to provide a place where Aboriginal voices can be heard, and culture presented.¹

The Aboriginal engagement has been well supported by Debbie Abrahams as the Gallery Director. As a non-Indigenous organisation, it was important to have someone lead the gallery whose values aligned with the ARG. There is a need for succession planning to ensure that any new leadership understands the values and goals of the Aboriginal Reference Group. Currently, Donna and Debbie feel that everyone who works at the gallery has taken the engagement policy on board.

To conduct true engagement, the gallery established the *Beyond the Dot* Program. Rather than display dot art, the gallery embarked on a program that would develop projects that invited and encouraged members of the local Aboriginal community to share their stories in their voices through visual arts projects and programming.

LMCAG wanted to promote Aboriginal artists but also wanted to engage the community on issues relevant to Aboriginal people, such as the stolen generations. The question therefore centred on: how do you draw people in, keep them engaged, and give them a smack of reality – without diluting or sugar coating it, as well as bring in the Aboriginal community?

¹ Debbie Abrahams, quoted from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Programming booklet, *Beyond the Dot*, 2016

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For 17 years the Gallery has had an Aboriginal Reference Group the long-term members are Douglas Archibald, Selena Archibald, Donna Biles Fernando, Louise Charles and Scott Luschwitz. The role of the ARG is clearly defined in a written terms of reference document. This includes ensuring protocols are adhered to and promoted within the gallery and community context and providing opportunity for cultural partnerships.

Debbie considers that the gallery works very closely with the ARG. She said that 'We consult and we listen and discuss things, but if the ARG says no, we will not do it.'

It is the long-term involvement and commitment to collaborate with the community that has led to a trust relationship. Donna says that the Aboriginal community members trust what we say, what the gallery shows.

An estimated six percent of the local population is Indigenous, more than double the national average but there is only a small group of traditional owners. Most member of the Aboriginal community arrived in the area many years ago. For instance, Donna's family moved from Brewarrina in the 1970s.

The Gallery's cultural programming policy is that 60% of projects must have Aboriginal content. They do not curate Aboriginal things in a show just to fit in. Where there is not a fit they do workshops and co-design with the community. For instance, they developed Connect to Country from workshops with children and involved rangers. There is an Indigenous mosaic in the garden and a meeting place on the grounds. These are aimed at making the Aboriginal community feel welcome and want to come and participate.

The gallery has worked with members of the community as well as descendants of traditional owners of country. They also work with the land council and families.

They have cultural projects such as 'Back to Bree' where people who are still living in Brewarrina come and visit their family that have moved here. They also do projects relating to the local cultural heritage, Bahtabah as well as neighbouring communities such as Darkinjung.

The ARG is used on a project by project basis. Merrill Ryan, the gallery's curator, is always consulting with the ARG for advice. For teacher in service days, they might bring in someone from the ARG to talk about how culture can be included in the curriculum.

The gallery also has practices about the display and management of Aboriginal art. For example, they use appropriate signage if people have passed away, and men's and women's knowledge is respected.

In developing a concept for a project, the Gallery asks itself an important first question. How can we bring the community into the gallery for a community project? For example, the *Lore and Order* exhibition included 240 ceramic ration bags. These were created with the help of 200 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal kids from Hunter and Central Coast schools. As part of the project, the children learnt how to make pottery tutored by a non-Indigenous ceramist and workshopped with two Aboriginal artists who collaborated on the design. Families, parents and grandparents, came to see the

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exhibition and to engage with the story and came to understand the Aboriginal reserves and missions that existed between 1804 and 1969.

It is about the art first and then the story, which can touch on the politics and history. As Debbie said, 'At the heart of it, it's a gallery – it's about the art first and then it's about the story. It's not like we go straight into politics, but this is what comes with Aboriginal projects.'

Cultural practices have also been reclaimed. A canoe project involved making bark canoes and collaborating with the local historical society and the National Australian Maritime Museum.

Another project involved the making of a community possum skin cloaks. The gallery brought in the expertise of Lee Darrick and Vicki Cousins, two Yorta Yorta women from Victoria who had revitalised possum skin cloak making in their country. The Hunter region has a possum skin cloak making heritage and a Hunter River Cloak was collected in the mid-1800s and is held by the Smithsonian Institute in Washington. The Gallery's Aboriginal Reference Group developed the Lake Cloak in consultation with the community and following protocols. The ochres from the local area were used to create the designs. Due to restrictions, the possum skins have to be imported from NZ. Approximately 50 pelts were created by individual Aboriginal people and school groups. The motifs for the the cloak included references to the major spiritual figure Biame and local Awabakal stories such as water stories. The project connected the different communities to come together - some of the stories were personal, some water, some land. Uncle Doug Archibald from the ARG and lead artist worked with people and asked how they wanted the design to look. They put them into themes in the designs, plant stories, and ocean stories.

The stories are not sacred, but are suitable to be public. During the exhibition of the cloak, students could make possum skin wrist bands. An education booklet entitled *A Possum Skin Cloak by the Lake* was created which detailed the journey and provided information on each pelt of the Lake Cloak. At the opening, they had Ray Kelly Senior and his men's group performed a possum dance and they made tail dance bands for the boys with the left-over tails. The cloaks and the story were displayed at the National Museum of Australia for six months.

The gallery also coordinated an Arts NSW funded project - the NSW Regional Aboriginal Visual Arts Emerging Leadership Program in 2014 /15. Four regional galleries: Dubbo, Goulburn, Lake Macquarie and Lismore participated. The project had two parts. The first part involved a paid internship in the gallery for an Aboriginal person. The second part was about providing professional development opportunities for the Aboriginal intern to go to national and state conferences. The group of interns spent a week in Sydney with Steve Miller from Museums & Galleries of NSW, visiting Sydney Biennale exhibits and cultural venues including the Museum of Contemporary Arts, Australian Museum and Arts Gallery of NSW. The program had mixed results for the interns, Alison Williams now creative director at the Yarrowarra Aboriginal Cultural Centres is probably the most successful.

What are the insights that can be modelled from the Lake Macquarie experience?

Many regional galleries have looked to the Lake Macquarie experience, visiting in person and discussing at length with Debbie but so far there has not been another example as successful in community engagement and longevity as well as critical success. Debbi and Donna offered this advice:

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If you are a regional gallery, you must represent all the community.

It is your responsibility to work with First Peoples, Aboriginal people, as a local and government institution.

You must firmly establish community support through a reference group. But importantly, you must listen to the reference group. It's about mentorship – the reference group mentors us.

Value the reference group as a valuable collection of people that you asked to get involved in your organisation that may be spread thinly across the community. Recognise their contributions and build in ways to honour them. When the individual members work on a project, they get paid by the gallery.

Be patient, getting projects up can take time. For instance, the Law and Order program went for a couple of years, stopping and starting because of sorry business. Be flexible but keep your focus.

Embed skills development in projects.

Underpin your Indigenous Engagement work as part of the organisation's planning and policy.

Understand that art projects are about healing and reconnecting to cultural practices. Let Aboriginal people advise what they see as important, so they can tell their stories.

Sometimes these stories have never been told, so there is vulnerability, but people find the strength to be brave in a group.

Every project breaks new ground as more trust is built, and the community heals.

Laddy Timberry at Jervis Bay Maritime Museum

Steve Miller writes:

Laddy Timberry is a Bidjigal Elder who crafts artefacts in his own workshop space and gallery by arrangement with the Jervis Bay Maritime Museum. The museum also has a very good display of the local Aboriginal culture and history, produced in consultation with the community. Laddie is in his gallery most days where visitors are welcome. He may demonstrate boomerang throwing or talk to visitors about artwork, the use of artefacts and the Shoalhaven history and culture.

NSW Major Cultural Institutions

Art Gallery of NSW

The Art Gallery of NSW responded that it had been involved in regional Aboriginal owned cultural venues in the past year but had not provided any details at the time this final draft was submitted. In the past it has produced Home: Aboriginal art from NSW a resource kit of 25 NSW Aboriginal artists which is available online as an educational resource:

www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/education/exhibition-kits/home-aboriginal-art-nsw.

Australian Museum

The Australian Museum has a long history and association with regional Aboriginal cultural centres, museums and keeping places driven largely by its collection. With funding support from the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), Australian Museum led by Phil Gordon was instrumental in the establishment of several venues with a repatriation and loan program that continues today.

Over the past ten years, the Australian Museum has assisted Aboriginal communities within NSW in identifying and achieving their specific cultural objectives. For most of these communities, the objective that was identified as being most important was the establishment of a cultural centre or keeping places within their community. This desire was supported by the recommendations put forward at the 1978 UNESCO seminar on the role of museums, preserving Indigenous culture where:

1. Community museums are set up at the request of Indigenous people;
2. 2. Indigenous people are trained in the areas of museum management . . .

. . . In February 1994, the Australian Museum was granted \$47,500 by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) for an extension of its outreach program for the next five months. . . The program has been undertaken in a number of stages. The objectives of these stages were to offer Aboriginal communities of NSW a broad base to gain specific skills in, and knowledge of, the successful development and running of a cultural centre or keeping place.

As a component of the outreach program, the Australian Museum will continue to fulfill these objectives until every Aboriginal community within NSW has been approached to participate in the program. There are about 150 such communities in NSW.

Phil Gordon

Community museums The Australian experience in Heritage, Museums and Galleries an introductory reader Gerard Corsane (Ed) 2005

Pp 360-361

In addition to the ongoing repatriation and loans program (which also embraces other parts of Australia) in the past year the Australian Museum has worked with M&G NSW as host for two-

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week mentorship for the Minjungbal Aboriginal Museum Manager Mleeka Hart and Creative Producer Programs, Exhibitions and Cultural Collections Laura McBride and M&G NSW's Steve Miller travelled to Walgett for a collections care workshop with the Dharriwaa Elders Group.

Phil Gordon sits on the M&G NSW Aboriginal Reference Committee and is the current M&G NSW Aboriginal Board Member.

State Library of NSW

Aboriginal staff Ronald Briggs and Nathan Sentance undertook a community visit to Walgett (NSW) to meet with members of the Dharriwaa Elders Group from the 2 to 5 August 2016. The visit was to assist with Collection Management of the DEG collection; funding was secured from a small Museums & Galleries of NSW grant. A follow up visit took place on the 7 and 8 December, when Kirsten Thorpe and Monica Galassi hosted a workshop to review reports developed regarding management of the collection. This work was finalised in August 2017.

Ronald Briggs sits on the M&G NSW Aboriginal Reference Committee.

Sydney Living Museums

An ACHAA associate member, Sydney Living Museums hosts Muru Mittigar Aboriginal Cultural Centre at its Rouse Hill Farm, following the end of Muru Mittigar's lease at its Penrith Lakes location. Head of Design Keiran Larkin, having previously presented a session at first ACHAA workshop at Yarrowarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre in 2015, was also commissioned to design the first ACHAA exhibition from our place, currently on tour to NSW Aboriginal cultural venues. The exhibition opens at Muru Mittigar in November to coincide with the joint ACHAA M&G NSW conference Living Centres for Living Cultures at Muru Mittigar. Muru Mittigar CEO Peter Chia is ACHAA's Treasurer.

Museum of Contemporary Art

The MCA has not had any exhibitions tour to regional NSW Aboriginal cultural venues in the past year but has toured exhibitions to regional public galleries that engage with their local Aboriginal community such as Moree Plains Gallery and the Western Plains Cultural Centre, Dubbo.

The modified Djurali Youth Art Careers Workshop will be presented to students in Condobolin Term 4 2017.

MCA Curator of Aboriginal and Islander Programs, Keith Munro sits on the M&G NSW Aboriginal Reference Group

Powerhouse Museum

The Powerhouse has not had direct engagement with NSW Aboriginal owned cultural venues in the past year. It has its regional professional development program open to all centres and holds its annual Regional Stakeholders Day in November, open to all regional centres.

University of Sydney Museums

Collection

- Macleay Museum has around 650 NSW artefacts, vast majority are stone tool artefacts around with around 70 of these were acquired prior to 1891. Many other NSW items were acquired/made prior to the 1930's.

NSW collections overview

- Objects - Club x8, Bowl x4, Spear x5, Shield x4, Grindstone x7, Boomerang x9, ephemera x10
- Stone tool collections - about 600 items from 80+ locations representing 35+ NSW language groups
- Around 100 historic photographs from 1860 – 1940 from at least 10 different NSW language groups

Engagement

- Through the university's repatriation program Indigenous curator Matt Poll engages with NSW LALC's quite regularly. In the past year the university has repatriated seven ancestral remains to two NSW land councils and is currently in the process of repatriating three sets of remains to two NSW LALC. All together it has repatriated over 200 sets.
- Matt has also had visits from representatives of NSW arts organisations visit collections. Mostly this was facilitated by as Orana Arts and Arts Northern Rivers and Sydney institutions Tranby College and Eora TAFE regularly bring students to tour collections. At least five private individual artists/curators community representatives have visited or expressed interest in visiting collections over the past year.

SECTOR CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

At the roundtable discussion at the State Library of NSW on the 30 August representatives of five of the leading NSW Aboriginal owned cultural venues met to discuss their issues, challenges and make recommendations.

Key challenges they raised (though not an exhaustive list):

Challenges

Immediate

1. Funding – not operational, not recurrent

There are limited categories of funding available to support long term operational costs. Available project/program funding does not consider the operational costs of running a centre and does not allow long term planning. Centres need to make a funding application every year. **Centre Managers feel they only get enough funding to stay open and this limits them being able to be strategic.**

The managers present argued that their centres are more than arts and culture focused. They offer significant value by providing social and cultural solutions as well as economic benefits within their local communities. It is felt that this contribution is not recognised widely by government. There is a need to build a reputation and then demonstrate that other values such as in tourism, heritage and culture are provided. It was argued that benefits the organisations give to achieving government policy in the provision of services and wellbeing should be sufficiently persuasive to allow them to be funded more significantly.

2. Lack of data and information about government funding sources

There is no information about the economic impact of their services. **There is a need for more analysis about the social impact and economic opportunities brought into the region.** The current evaluation measures need to move from the deficit model to one of social investment. For example, ISO 26000 Guidance on Social Responsibility measures the impact of activity (<http://asq.org/learn-about-quality/learn-about-standards/iso-26000>). Can this be used to measure Centre activity?

3. How to ramp up engagement of Aboriginal people in management?

More opportunities for Aboriginal people to have meaningful work are needed, and not just voluntary. There is expectation that Aboriginal people do this work because this is what Aboriginal people live for. **While Aboriginal people chose social and cultural pursuits, their work has community and economic value and it should be paid. There is a need for jobs and training for Aboriginal people.**

On another level, there is a need for governance skills to be developed to encourage new board members as founder/previous board members transition out. This will allow the handing on of governance and corporate knowledge to the next generation.

The Centres exist for the community and have the key role of Aboriginal youth engagement – passing on cultural engagement to the next generation needs to be the focus of the immediate future.

4. Investment

Centres need assistance and support to access investment from private investors. This could open opportunities to collaborate on infrastructure projects

5. Dependence on Individuals

Currently there is a dependence on key individuals to keep the centres open. There needs to be support for a system based approach to enable others to assist. Some strategies include:

- a. Succession plans for handover of knowledge
- b. Building the pipelines of managers
- c. Indigenous training

Medium Term

6. Sustainability of buildings and managing collections

Venues need places to house collections. Buildings are often historical and aging. The centres do not have proper funding to maintain their buildings. Most centres do not have a permanent home. It would be good to have architecturally designed spaces which are relevant to Aboriginal cultural values.

Centres are struggling with collections in relation to storage. There is so much material already collected that they must be managed and categorised. Further, centres are receiving more material from excavations, institutions and from community members through private collections/donations. "We turn up on Monday and somebody has left a box of artefacts on the doorstep". People have the expectation that a Keeping Place will take all material, that they can store and appropriately manage the cultural objects and this demand is getting difficult.

7. Safeguarding Collections

It is important to plan for sustainable long-term management of cultural objects, materials, digital files and databases. The issues are:

- A back up place is needed in case the Centres cannot store all materials in-situ
- Digitisation and cataloguing help is needed.
- Offsite storage could assist in case there are security issues or fire, destruction.

There was support for a regional or state based depository to hold materials on behalf of Centres. Such a place would need to be subject to Aboriginal governance. This is similar to the call for a National Keeping Place, as a repository for unprovenanced cultural materials.

It is not just about keeping the records, there needs to be funding for teaching the next generation to assess and learn about the cultural significance of objects and materials. This needs to include opening opportunities to allow Aboriginal people to nurture and innovate using their materials and cultural knowledge. Eg: tourism opportunities.

A further point was that the Centres require support from existing state based agencies. Sharing of resources and people would be valuable. Opportunities for collaborations should be supported,

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particularly around preservation and digitisation of collections but also storage and hands on projects to do inventory. A department that could have more collaborative opportunities is OEH. The NPWS Act process a lot of material collected in the excavation of places and sites. OEH has digitised material and has information that could be useful for the management of collections.

8. Role of ACHAA

The role of ACHAA is important. **ACHAA is a peak body network.** It can form partnerships and networks and provide guidance to Centres to share resources and develop projects for mutual benefit. ACHAA should be acknowledged as an important component of our Indigenous arts infrastructure.

Issues

1. Government support and funding

Several members asked who their Minister was, was it the Arts? How can they get access to the whole state departments, so they can be assisted with their work?

Managers feel there is a need for recurrent funding to assist centres with operational costs. Their core business is knowledge and culture. There should be a value placed on cultural values.

2. Office of the Environment and Heritage

It was noted by the group that a major concern is that old records of the Aboriginal Heritage officers from the Office Environment and Heritage are not being digitised. There should be coordination from OEH, OAA and Archives on this.

3. People resource issues – employment and volunteers

The Centres have limited people employed to do the work and rely on volunteers to assist with their core business. Since the end of CDEP this has been difficult. This means that staff are overloaded, and risk burn out. Although there is much more being done to address staff burning out, there is still the need for staff training and inductions. Centres rely on retired age volunteers; people who they can trust, but this is not sustainable.

4. Collecting archives and management practices

How do we make sure our record keeping practices are capturing information for the future needs of communities?

5. Arts skills development

Painting dots is often seen as appropriation of Western Desert Aboriginal styles of art. A lot of artists from NSW paint dots. It has become an expression of their Aboriginal identity and is often the type of work that buyers want. Tensions arise when funding agencies and others tell artists that they should not paint dots but find their own styles, heritage and motifs to depict in art.

Managers mentioned the example of art being taught in the prisons with Aboriginal art motifs and designs from the NT Aboriginal communities. There have also been examples in schools.

This debate about authenticity has an impact on cultural centres.

6. State Cultural Centre

Previous proposals for national centres were noted. People present felt that a state based centre could assist with the long-term management of objects, digitisation and the sharing of information.

7. Public perceptions of role of centres

There is an expectation for Centres to take documents and artefacts; to store and catalogue documents and artefacts; Family Tree/AIATSIS type function. The Centres find it difficult to keep up with cataloguing the inventory (film, photography) with limited resources.

See also the desktop research, which includes a SWOT analysis from a previous ACHAA strategic planning workshop day.

BACKGROUND

Historical highlights and support

In 1993 the adoption of a national policy for Australian museums, *Previous Possessions, New Obligations: policies for Museums in Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People*, was an important milestone that provided a framework for museums to engage in new ways with their Indigenous constituents, as well as placing an obligation on them to do so (Griffen 1996, 199a)

Previous Possessions, New Obligations can be viewed as an instrument for organisational change and learning: museums in Australia have had to change in response to the demands and expectations placed on them by Indigenous people and governments within a broad social and political context. One major outcome found from discussions with museum staff in the workshops was that institutions that have worked closely with Indigenous communities in developing public programs, conducting research programs or in policy development reported positive changes in organisational practice and understanding on both sides. This came primarily through recognising that the dialogue is about 'relationships, not just objects (Kelly et al. 2000). The employment of Indigenous staff was a particularly strong factor in assisting this process, something that more museums would like to increase. Overall, there was acknowledgement that these issues present opportunities for an integrated national strategy and closer working relationships across institutions and within Indigenous communities: developing a genuine community of practice in Australia.

Developing a community of practice: museums and reconciliation in Australia, Lynda Kelly and Phil Gordon in *Museums, Society, Inequality*, Richard Sandell Ed, 2002

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In Australia, we tend to use the term 'keeping place'. This term covers a whole range of community-inspired activities that fall outside of the classic museum models. By this, I mean a large building built to professional standards. The examples of this approach are large-scale tourist-orientated developments such as the museums in Cairns and Tweed Heads. In contrast, you find small complexes that are community-orientated and definitely not in a classic museum model, such as those in Brewarrina and Wallaga Lake, right through to small display cases in community offices that are there to encourage cultural issues

Phil Gordon *Community museums The Australian experience in Heritage, Museums and Galleries an introductory reader* Gerard Corsane (Ed) 2005

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Over the past ten years, the Australian Museum has assisted Aboriginal communities within NSW in identifying and achieving their specific cultural objectives. For most of these communities, the

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objective that was identified as being most important was the establishment of a cultural centre or keeping places within their community. This desire was supported by the recommendations put forward at the 1978 UNESCO seminar on the role of museums, preserving Indigenous culture where:

3. Community museums are set up at the request of Indigenous people;
4. 2. Indigenous people are trained in the areas of museum management . . .

. . . In February 1994, the Australian Museum was granted \$47,500 by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) for an extension of its outreach program for the next five months. . . The program has been undertaken in a number of stages. The objectives of these stages were to offer Aboriginal communities of NSW a broad base to gain specific skills in, and knowledge of, the successful development and running of a cultural centre or keeping place.

As a component of the outreach program, the Australian Museum will continue to fulfill these objectives until every Aboriginal community within NSW has been approached to participate in the program. There are about 150 such communities in NSW.

Ibid Pp 360-361

An analysis of responses found that Keeping Places were created for two reasons: to meet the needs of their own community and for broader community outcomes (Kelly 1999).

Maintenance and preservation of cultural heritage was the main reason behind establishing a Keeping Place within the local community: 'To keep our culture alive through community displays, documentation of objects and artefacts, through education . . .[and] information on a database' (Kelly 1999: 4). Other identified ways of meeting community needs were in promoting contemporary ways of living and working, educating Indigenous youth in their cultural heritage as well as in 'traditional' practices, providing a meeting place for the community, and a place for preserving artefacts, and establishing a way for Indigenous people to tell their stories in their own ways. Associated with this was the strong feeling that Keeping Places supported community spirit and pride, encouraging self-sufficiency through providing employment and skills and showing the diversity of culture, languages, stories and histories.

It was felt that Keeping Places were an effective way to promote Indigenous culture to the broader Australian community and overseas visitors, through education and tourism programmes, as well as viable businesses that bring economic benefits to the region. The positive aspects of establishing a Keeping Place were summarized as: 'Increasing pride and self-esteem through keeping culture alive, and achieving self-sufficiency by educating the wider community, promoting ways of working together and with Government in documenting histories (Kelly 1996: 6). Responding to diversity in community needs and outcomes ensures that; 'Aboriginal people [become] partners in the management of their cultural material, [and they] understand how museums can assist them' (Gordon 1998b: 123)

Developing a community of practice: museums and reconciliation in Australia, Lynda Kelly and Phil Gordon in *Museums, Society, Inequality*, Richard Sandell Ed, 2002

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Keeping Places contribute to the achievement of Indigenous peoples' cultural objectives in their own ways that are managed by them; 'It's ours, we're able to provide something to the wider community' [Interview transcript 2]. Another theme identified was the education of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, especially youth, about history, stories and culture:

For me the museum is one of the best things that has happened to the area because we've had that many schools go through, we've had that many university people go through, we've had that many tourist go through, it's unbelievable. . . It's a really good feeling to be able to share that with other people besides your own community.'
[Interview Transcript 3]

Associated with this was the instilling of pride and respect within the community by educating visitors through public programs: 'it's educating the local non-Indigenous community of our ways [and because of that] we are getting a lot more respect from them now' [Interview Transcript 2]

Preservation of and research into significant sites within the local area was another important role identified for Keeping Places: 'So it's time to say "we want to preserve that site" so you can say "there's the site" and tell them the Dreamtime story and tell them what it means [Interview Transcript 3]. Keeping Places are also established as a dedication [of] the Aboriginal people that had suffered injustices in the past . . . and the people who tried to stand up for our Aboriginal rights [in] times of struggle [Interview Transcript 4]

Ibid Pp 165-166

From the previous *Living Centres from Living Cultures Report*:

Museums & Galleries of NSW is proud of its engagement and support for the Aboriginal sector during the past 11 years of its existence.

Board: Aboriginal Director ongoing since 2000 (four in total)

Staff: Aboriginal Sector Development Manager since January 2011

Programs: Professional development programs with Aboriginal/indigenous focus or subject matter. Since 2000 M&G NSW has run over 15 programs exploring Aboriginal themes and issues in museums and galleries and/or with Aboriginal speakers (see separate appendix).

Attendances at professional development programs run by M&G NSW
Since 2007 – representatives who have identified themselves from 22 Aboriginal organisations have attended M&G NSW programs. Individuals who have identified themselves as Aboriginal equal 37.

Grants support for Indigenous projects 2003-2010

From 2003 to March 2010 a total of \$79,091 in funding support to volunteer museums and regional galleries was provided to support activities with Aboriginal collections and communities. This is a total of 21 grants across 11 regions of the state. The breakdown is as follows:

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Grant	Number awarded
Gallery FocusED	2
Indigenous Mentorship	1
Incoming Touring exhibition grants	9
VIM development	2
VIM small	7

Region	Number of Grants
Central West	3
Hunter	3
Murray	2
Northern	1
Northern Rivers	4
Orana	2
Riverina Eastern	1
South East	2
Southern Tablelands	1
West	1
Western Sydney	1

Year	Number of Grants
2003	2
2004	1
2005	1
2006	1
2007	3
2008	2
2009	7
2010	3

The following is a breakdown of the areas of support that have been funded

Project area	Number of Grants
Support for the display of Aboriginal material held in volunteer museums in collaboration with local Aboriginal communities	3
Storage of Aboriginal material	2
An assessment of Aboriginal collections held in volunteer museums undertaken in collaboration with local Aboriginal communities (leading to volunteer museums having an improved understanding of both the collections and the local Aboriginal communities)	2
An oral history about the impact of agriculture on the region incorporating an Aboriginal perspective	1
Indigenous Gallery Mentorship bringing a regional gallery staff member to Sydney to work with Aboriginal curators at the AGNSW and Campbelltown Regional Arts Centre	1
Support a volunteer museum to tour an exhibition of local Aboriginal sports stars to local Aboriginal (Bundgalung) communities	1
Support education programs in conjunction with Aboriginal art or heritage exhibitions (2 NSW based material)	3
Host Aboriginal Art/heritage exhibitions (7 NSW based material)	8

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Standards Program

An Aboriginal standards reviewer served on the standards review team (who visit museums, desk review policy and other documents and provide reports and advice to museums and galleries who have carried out the program)

Barina South was on the team from 2004 to 2007 inclusive, Cheryl Connors joins the team in 2010

Aboriginal organisations that have participated in the standards program:

2007: Illawarra and Southern Highlands region

Illawarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Keeping Place

2008: New England and North West region

Armidale Aboriginal Keeping Place

2010: Orana region

Brewarrina Aboriginal Cultural Museum

Touring exhibitions of Aboriginal material

From 1999 -2008 toured 16 exhibitions with significant representation of Aboriginal material, 6 of which had an entirely Aboriginal focus.

These exhibitions went to 91 venues with audience attendance of 268,214

Exhibitions sent to Aboriginal Organisations

Exhibitions have been sent to 6 Aboriginal cultural centres and it is planned to send the 2010

Parliament of NSW Aboriginal Art Prize (2011): to:

WADJAR gallery at Yarrawarra Aboriginal Corporation

Armidale and Region Aboriginal Cultural Centre & Keeping Place,

Additionally Aboriginal exhibitions and galleries are promoted through the M&G NSW register for instance in 2009

GUNNETHEKUN (MOTHER EARTH)

Organisation: **Thullii Dreaming, NSW**

Other activities

Aboriginal issues have been included in publications and resource material including an issue in 2007 focussing entirely on indigenous issues in museums and galleries. See

http://mgsw.org.au/publications/issue_3_2007/

M&G NSW support other organisations that work with Aboriginal communities, for instance the CEO has been a long-term judge of the local government cultural awards which recognise and promote Aboriginal cultural development and programs in local government.

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From M&G NSW Museums Programs and Collections Manager Manager Tamara Lavrencic:

Aboriginal engagement with Museum Programs and Collections Unit 2011-2017

Grants Program

A previous report (March 2010) provided figures on grant support for indigenous projects 2003-2010. This report covers the years since then 2011-2017.

From 2011 to September 2017 a total of \$25,970 in funding support to volunteer museums and cultural centres/keeping places was provided to support museum activities with Aboriginal collections and communities. This is a total of 4 grants across 4 regions of the state. The breakdown is as follows:

Grant	Number awarded
Volunteer Museum - Small	1
Building Improvement Grants	3
Region	Number awarded
West	1
Murray	1
Far West	1
Mid North Coast	1

Overall in this period (2011-2017) there were 5 applications for the suite of Museum Grants, only one was unsuccessful.

The following is a breakdown of the areas of support that have been funded

Project area	Number of Grants
Support for the display of Aboriginal material held in volunteer museums in collaboration with local Aboriginal communities	1
Building assessments and energy efficiency or feasibility studies to ensure that buildings being used, or considered for use, as museums and galleries are appropriate and suitable for such use.	3

Standards Program

Wadjar Regional Indigenous Gallery is participating in the Standards 2017 program.

Observations

Many small, volunteer run museums have Aboriginal cultural objects in their collections; often in a separate display case and prominently displayed as the start of the timeline to the exhibits. For some artefacts, there is a well-established local provenance; for others this work is yet to be done. Most museums are aware that they need to engage with the local Aboriginal communities to produce culturally appropriate interpretation and in recent years; some progress has been made in developing these relationships. Yamba Museum is one such example; they won an IMAGinE award in 2013 for Vision4Change, an Aboriginal art exhibit developed in collaboration with local Yaegl Elders.

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“The Port of Yamba Historical Society takes pride in their collaborative partnership with the Yaegl community that has produced improved permanent displays that integrate Yaegl and non-Aboriginal history as well as an award winning Aboriginal art exhibition, Vision4Change, in 2013 and our “Friendship Trees” in 2014”.

<http://www.pyhsmuseum.org.au/yamba-history/first-peoples/>

2011	Touring exhibition	Armidale and Region Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Keeping Place	The ACCKP held a two-month exhibition of the 2010 Parliament of NSW Aboriginal Art Prize.
2016	Building Improvement Grant	Tibooburra	Assessment of building in terms of protecting collection and providing for visitor comfort
2017	Building Improvement Grant	Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre Aboriginal Corporation	Assessment of building in terms of protecting collection and providing for visitor comfort
2016	Building Improvement Grant	Mutawintji Cultural Centre	Assessment of building in terms of protecting collection and providing for visitor comfort
2014	VIM Small Grant	Nambucca Headland Museum	Funded purchase of an Interpretative Panel for Aboriginal tools and artifacts of local Gumbayngirr people. The narrative panel was constructed in consultation with the Murrumbidgee Language Centre (Gary Williams) and the Nambucca Junior Land Council (Gary Cattanach) as a step toward including local cultural narratives.

From M&G NSW Annual Reports 2011- 2016

The planning and delivery of the Aboriginal summit Keeping Places & Beyond: Building cultural futures in NSW was a major pillar of M&G NSW’s work in this area. With core project funding from Arts NSW, the summit was held at CarriageWorks, Redfern on 19 and 20 September 2011. A final report and recommendations was prepared for the State Government, representing the views of the 122 delegates attending from across the state including from the three tiers of Government, NGO stakeholders, land councils, artists, heritage workers, educators, cultural practitioners, academics, archivists, researchers and M&G NSW staff. These recommendations form the basis for future work by M&G NSW and others in strengthening the sector. The summit built upon inter-departmental knowledge and developed an awareness of the different models, both physical and virtual, that communities can use as a keeping place/cultural centre concept. Delegates expressed a clear desire for a network of keeping places/cultural centres to be established.

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To examine the feasibility and level of interest in this recommendation a series of consultations took place (2012) with Aboriginal communities and organisations across NSW in Sydney, Penrith, Eden, Huskisson, Corindi Beach, the Hunter-Matiland region, Lismore, Moree, Walgett, Brewarrina, Warren, Dubbo, Wagga Wagga, Griffith, Leeton, Deniliquin and Albury.

The Aboriginal Culture, Heritage and Arts Association was established with secretariat support from M&G NSW and an interim committee of Chair (Yarrowarra); Treasurer (Armidale Cultural Centre); Secretary (Yarkuwa Knowledge Centre) plus Muru Mittigar (Public Officer) and Muda Aboriginal Corporation/2CuzFM. The first AGM and workshops were held at Yarrowarra Cultural Centre at Corindi Beach on 9 and 10 September (2015)

Travelling Places is an M&G NSW devised program (2013/15) to build virtual keeping places, embedding skills in Aboriginal communities in digital storytelling, protocols, database management, and copyright and intellectual property rights. Funded through the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation, the 2013 program focused on the Wiradjuri communities of Leeton, Griffith, Cowra, Condobolin and Wagga. (In 2015) Workshops were held in Bathurst, Dubbo, Moree, Armidale and Sydney. The program also utilised the resources of the Australian Film, Television & Radio School's Indigenous Unit and the Arts Law Centre of Australia's Artists in the Black program. The preferred protocols database is Mukurtu, a US developed, Australian-inspired collections database. M&G NSW has held workshops on Mukurtu's ability to impose protocols and restrict access. More than 500 Indigenous communities and individuals around the world are now using Mukurtu.

Collection documentation grants in 2016 funded a block of work completed by expert professionals and workshops for volunteers and staff at four Aboriginal venues: Muru Mittigar Aboriginal Cultural Centre, Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre, Armidale Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Dharriwaa Elders Group. Selection of projects was through competitive application assessment. The small amount of remaining money assisted Boomalli Aboriginal Artists' Cooperative with archiving its poster collection. The new Manager of the Minjungbal Aboriginal Museum at Tweed Heads was funded for a two week mentorship based at the Australian Museum and visiting a number of other key Sydney collecting institutions. Funding for all of this was through the then Arts NSW.

Arts NSW also funded the development of ACHAA's first exhibition *From our place: an exhibition from NSW Aboriginal Cultural Centres*. Curator Alison Williams worked with nine of the 11 ACHAA Core members to select works and the exhibition opened at the Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre in Deniliquin in October 2016, accompanied by an exhibition booklet and education notes. Subsequent funding allowed the exhibition to tour in 2017 to Temora Rural Museum, Yarrowarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Muru Mittigar Aboriginal Cultural Centre.

Development of this report and methodology

This report has been commissioned and funded by Create NSW, the State Government's newly formed department for the arts and screen. Create NSW commissioned Museums & Galleries of NSW and in particular Manager of Aboriginal Programs, Steve Miller, to produce it.

M&G NSW in turn commissioned Terri Janke & Company to support the development and production of the report. A legal expert in the area of Indigenous intellectual property and copyright, Terri Janke has also had significant in-depth involvement with cultural institutions and funding bodies involved with Indigenous people for many years. Critically, Terri Janke & Company has recently been appointed to produce the Indigenous Roadmap, a 10-year plan for Indigenous engagement and employment for Museums Galleries Australia. It was felt the two reports could be mutually supportive and in the spirit of collegiate cooperation, the agreement refers to sharing of intellectual property and information contained in this report.

The information was gathered, and the report produced in a 10 week period between August and mid October 2017. Information gathering was through surveys, field trips to the Hunter Valley and Illawarra Regions and a roundtable involving five regional Aboriginal cultural venue managers and two representatives of Sydney collecting institutions (Australian Museum – Phil Gordon; State Library of NSW – Ronald Briggs) at the State Library of NSW on 30 August.

Other information contained in this report was gathered from previous documents through desktop research. There was also a small amount of data gathered from the internet, through authorised organisational websites, where other collection methods were not possible.

Desktop Research

Overview

Approach to collection and representation of NSW Aboriginal culture

M&G NSW recognizes the rights of Aboriginal communities to determine their own cultural representation. It is this regional and local support that is behind emerging development and activity in the sector. In the spirit of this activity and with respect for Aboriginal culture and traditions, M&G NSW believes it can offer valuable and practical assistance. M&G NSW also recognises that traditionally, Aboriginal cultural values are intimately and intricately tied to the land; imposed cultural disruption has impacted on these practices and relationships. Within this historical context, sites of cultural interaction can be naturally occurring or purpose built, encompassing spaces and uses that expand conventional concepts of museums and galleries. This strategy paper attempts to bridge these worlds.

Steve Miller, P2, Living Centres for Living Cultures
A strategy paper by Museums & Galleries of NSW in response
to the Arts NSW Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Strategy 2010
2011

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The holistic nature of Aboriginal culture means a multidisciplinary approach is appropriate and possible: artefacts and archival material, genealogies, libraries, photographs, visual art, performance, storytelling, music, dance, oral histories, ecology of the natural landscape, sustainable living, astronomy and education all have their place. Living centres for living cultures also mean places for community functions, festivals and markets, ceremonies and celebrations: births, deaths and marriages. Sustainability of centres requires sustainability of communities: training and development opportunities: artist workshops and residences, facilities for physical activities such as dance tuition and physical fitness; homework centres, working with youth at risk, day care, engagement of Elders and regular activities, including after-hours activities. All of these are potential considerations within Aboriginal culture for centres that serve their communities and beyond.

Ibid Pg 4

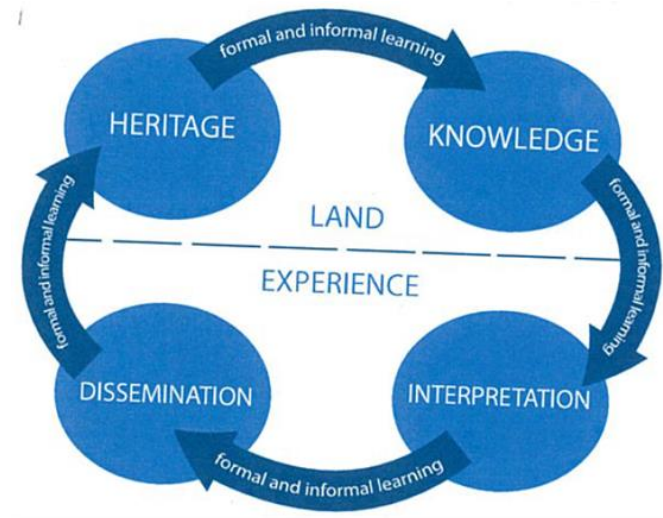
Yet, as this publication reveals, the Aboriginal arts and cultural sector across NSW is more vibrant and active than most would expect. Still, much of the great work occurs in isolation, is often project based and requires dedicated research to uncover. There is no one site, physical or virtual, that accumulates, stores and presents this knowledge and experience, linking heritage, arts and cultural practice as understood by Aboriginal people.

Steve Miller Pg 2

State of the sector publication 2011 for Keeping Places and Beyond: building cultural futures in NSW summit

<https://mgnsw.org.au/sector/aboriginal/>

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Ibid Pg 3

Places and spaces are the starting point for building cultural futures in NSW, providing opportunities for engagement, interaction and experience. Places can be purpose built structures or in situ, such as those managed by NSW National Parks & Wildlife. The roles of heritage management, keeping places, transmission of knowledge, arts and cultural practice, cultural enterprise and the internet as a platform for virtual spaces will be central to the discussions and recommendations.

Ibid Pg 4

The M&G NSW recommendations are:

- That an Incorporated Association of Keeping Places and Cultural Centres be formed
- That the Indigenous Australian Art Commercial Code of Conduct be promoted
- That a program to embed digitisation skills within Aboriginal communities, keeping place and cultural centres be developed.
- That Aboriginal arts programs support the development of Aboriginal arts professionals including artists, curators and administrators along with the range of support staff.
- That the knowledge of Elders and older community members is preserved and shared to ensure generations are informed of local heritage and cultural practices
- That the proposed regionally located hub and spoke development model for museums and galleries support Aboriginal community cultural maintenance and aspirations
- That skill development workshops and activities for Aboriginal arts workers and communities take place in regional centres including the creation of physical and digital keeping places and other web based activities

Steve Miller and Michael Huxley, P1

M&G NSW response to Summit Recommendations 2012

Community Recommendations

On the second day of the summit, the assembly of delegates broke into eight workshop groups around specific themes and worked with facilitators to produce specific recommendations. These six groups each then feed recommendations back to the larger group.

As expected, some of the recommendations from these groups suggest action beyond the scope of the summit or even the role of M&G NSW. These verbatim recommendations are included here as a record of the group discussions.

Heritage as cultural maintenance:

- Form an association of “Keeping Places” and cultural centres – between communities and institutional bodies – a coalition
- Need to incorporate broad definition of “Keeping Places” to maximise grants and support
- Idea of formal association: NSW Aboriginal Culture and Heritage Association (NSWACHA) Role: advisory/consultative; representing aspirations of local communities; advocacy/lobbying
- Motto: “Local, Community, Unity!”
- Next step: to band together as an association/organisation and then brainstorm finer points/issues
- Museums & Galleries of NSW to send invitation to call delegates to form organization committee

Digital media (including digitization, filmmaking, oral histories, internet and broadcast media):

- To change this topic's title from 'community ownership and control' to 'community dreaming custodianship and control'
- To develop education and awareness strategies for community groups, artists and individuals for the publication of online culturally significant material and cultural assets
- To foster Aboriginal business ownership for Aboriginal economy assets eg Gadigal media custodian operator
- To research and deliver a national Aboriginal website to cover the areas of art, histories and cultures - mother hub from which each state and territory is interlinked
- Support the adoption of a best practice models for culture identity and practices for Aboriginal youth eg Tirkandi model, AIME model
- Koori Youth Program model
- Support the knowledge teaching of existing elders and older community members to ensure generations are informed of local heritage and cultural practices Broader Community Engagement
- Look at custodianship arrangements/ agreements
- Access to archival information. No fee for Aboriginal owners
- Specific funding for marketing and promotion of Aboriginal NSW, its art, culture, products, history and stories

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- Fund an Aboriginal Heritage Trust in major locations - links all regional centres.

Based on Victorian model

- We wish to have recognition of Aboriginality as a nationality
- State govt. to request federal to improve and strengthen competitiveness and sustainability of resources and tourism industry to enhance prosperity through implementation of the minister of de-regulation for special purpose funds to be established for cultural museums.
- Broader Community Engagement
- Ensure that school education curriculum is NSW focused in NSW
- That Carriageworks land is developed and handed back to the Aboriginal community for economic development/ tourism/ cultural activities/ bush tucker/ horticulture
- Look at the Renew Newcastle model to set aside spaces for regional groups to access cheap space. Re. utilising vacant space/ include Council / Dpt. Of Environment properties
- Ensure there is an Aboriginal involvement in the redevelopment of Goat Island for Aboriginal business development and potential
- Public servants ensure that we take on board input from symposium and revitalize our efforts to push ideas as Custodians.
- Development of Discovery Tours (OEH heritage) to better suit the tourist market needs and promote as an Aboriginal product/ and acknowledge Aboriginal content.
- Provide training to community organisations to access corporate funding

Engagement with Government and other stakeholders

- responsible use and management of material and information
- agreements established between institutions, government and 'owners'
- ramifications for not complying
- protocols developed for researchers, commentators, government etc collecting 'stories' and other information -> appropriate remuneration for contributors
- arts and culture advocacy
- association of existing groups (discussed at morning session)
- provides capacity building to members
- coordination and networking
- lobby government to protect the rights of Aboriginal artists
- need a seat at key tables
- getting information about supports and services and funding out there in a more coordinated way
- regulation of artistic integrity ensuring locally made products are sold, not imports
- financial returns to artists ensured
- promotion of the Indigenous Art Code and enforcement of the code

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- Repatriation of material and information held by governments back to communities
- ongoing support for management
- Local Government Integrated planning framework
- mandatory arts and culture targets to be incorporated
- Aboriginal culture & heritage aims to be reflected in the Objects of the Local Government Act
- Linkages between this and Heritage reforms
- Ensure stronger role and decision making for communities
- Ensure increased transparency and accountability
- Increased support through the transition from government-controlled ACH management to increased community control and management
- real respect and support for cultural obligations for looking after Country and culture
- Support locally appropriate governance structures (including cultural governance)
- Respect Aboriginal concept of Country – eg “living galleries

Delegates

2011 Aboriginal Summit Report from Keeping Places and Beyond: building cultural futures in NSW summit

Ibid Pg 18-21

Models

Communities that are up and running with sites for arts and cultural activity don't just want them, they really want them. That is, time and again there has been initiative and commitment, often without financial compensation, to establish premises, organisations and activity and keep them running

- Volunteering is not easily understood as such, it is more about commitment to one's culture and community, particularly youth and future generations
- Despite this, many centres and groups struggle for existence. Economic times are getting tougher, funding opportunities more competitive, products, whether art, artefacts, bush foods or “cultural tourism experiences” rarely provide stable income streams as stand alones
- Successful organisations have developed strong governance and business management as well as quality, reliable products
- There is increased support in general across Government but no universal model of funding opportunities. Also, years of project funding does not necessarily result in organisational funding and stability
- There is strong understanding of the role of heritage in communities: traditional knowledge and cultural practice, language documentation, genealogies, traditional stories and post contact histories. Many centres are engaged in these activities solely or as a basis for further creative practice. Despite this, Governments up until now have struggled conceptually to fund these foundation activities, though more recent evidence suggests hope for the future

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

- The natural environment including sites of meaning, bush foods and care for environment are easily accommodated within many centres' activities as part of the Aboriginal holistic approach to culture. Where funding may be available to assist, it is usually isolated within heritage and environment, though some random art based projects have drawn from this source
- Community health and wellbeing is also a readily understood concept for engagement with arts and culture, particularly amongst Elders

Arts and cultural activity is significantly increased where there are Regional Indigenous Cultural Development Officers (RICDO's) part of the Regional Arts NSW network of Regional Arts Development Officers (RADOs)

Steve Miller Pg 4

State of the sector publication 2011 for Keeping Places and Beyond: building cultural futures in NSW summit

<https://mgns.org.au/sector/aboriginal/>

Further education through regional TAFE's and universities has played a role in helping organisations establish themselves both in arts practice and business development

This summit is specifically identified within the Arts NSW Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Strategy 2010 (2.3.3). Additionally, the community consultations that informed that strategy indicated:

- A major piece of infrastructure that was advocated was Aboriginal arts and cultural centres, or "blackfella spaces", which many participants wanted to be located around NSW. While people described different types of centres, with varying ideas of what they should contain and how they should work, a common view is that emerging Aboriginal artists need a place where they can exhibit/per form their work to test ideas, build confidence and provide a stepping stone to exhibiting/per forming in larger venues and non-Aboriginal venues. These centres provide opportunities not only for Aboriginal artists but for arts workers, for example Aboriginal curators, to learn and hewn their skills. Participants suggested that new and less well-known Aboriginal artists often do not get access to venues that non-Aboriginal artists would use to get their start, and that this was an important justification for Aboriginal arts and cultural centres
- Another potential purpose participants gave for Aboriginal arts and cultural centres is to provide the facilities and equipment (kilns, presses, etc) for Aboriginal artists to do their work. This is particularly important given the high cost of people equipping themselves, which acts as a deterrent for people to continue in the arts
- Other justifications given were that arts centres act like agents for the people who use them, connecting potential markets to these artists and hopefully opening doors for them. Centres can connect artists to one another, creating networks of practice and the opportunity for people to assist one another. They can also provide a focal point and meeting place for the local Aboriginal community to learn about Aboriginal culture in a safe and nurturing environment.

Ibid Pg 5

Ready to Return Centres

This refers to The Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) storage facilities which are for the safe-keeping of Aboriginal cultural material awaiting planned repatriation to Country (i.e. to the Aboriginal community of origin). These centres are a nominated point that enables provenance cultural material to leave DECCW and other collecting agencies and return to Country.

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

Keeping Places

This refers to Aboriginal community managed places for the safekeeping of repatriated cultural material. Such places can be established within a DECCW facility; however, they are more likely to be established within a facility owned or managed by an Aboriginal community group.

While some communities have looked to local government for support in developing a keeping place in a park or other public facility, many have folded a keeping place into a larger Aboriginal organisation or built an Aboriginal organisation around a keeping place. Those that seek to develop a stand-alone keeping place have generally struggled with ongoing maintenance issues.

As part of the overall development of the sector, this summit seeks to align those with keeping place aspirations with parallel opportunities to maintain and develop cultural engagement.

Ibid Pg 6

The Association of Northern, Kimberley and Arnhem Artists (ANKAA) works across the Aboriginal art industry in:

- Consultation
- Advocacy & Lobbying
- Resourcing and supporting
- Training
- Referral and networking
- Marketing and Promotion (telling people about art centres and artists).

It has a website: www.ankaaa.org.au

Desart is the Association of Central Australian Aboriginal Art and Craft Centres and is committed to:

- Respect for traditional culture and Aboriginal peoples' aspirations
- Employment for Aboriginal people
- Support for sound governance, professional standards and ethical industry practices
- Marketing and advocacy for Aboriginal-owned art centres
- To represent the voice of Aboriginal art centres and their artists and advocate effectively

It has a website: www.desart.com.au

The Koorie Heritage Trust Inc

Located in Melbourne CBD, The Koorie Heritage Trust Inc is a not-for-profit Aboriginal community organisation that aims to protect, preserve and promote the living culture of Aboriginal people of south-eastern Australia. The Trust cares for a diverse range of artefacts, artworks, crafts, oral histories, books, manuscripts, historical material and photographs and houses four gallery spaces; a permanent interactive exhibition that teaches history and culture, and a retail shop that sells authentic products.

Some of the activities offered at The Trust include art workshops, educational programs, accredited training, cross-cultural training, cultural tours and touring exhibitions. The Trust also provides a range of programs and services to the Koorie community and the general public including assisting community members trace their family history; youth projects designed to connect with Elders and culture, and an extensive research library dating back to the 1800's.

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

In Queensland and the Northern Territory, networks of Indigenous Knowledge Centres have been developed through regional libraries, offering training and engagement in multimedia and internet technology, recording oral histories and developing digital storytelling. Based on these models, the Federal Government commissioned a feasibility report for a National Indigenous Knowledge Centre and network, physical or virtual in 2010 but no further announcements have been made.

Ibid Pg 7

Issues

Can keeping places engage communities? How do not-for-profit centres successfully develop cultural enterprise? What protocols should there be around knowledge sharing on the internet? What opportunities can be created for education and training, career pathways and mentoring? What indeed, does success look like for Aboriginal arts and culture in NSW? You will find more issue-based questions at the end of each case study.

Ibid Pg 4

ACHAA Planning Workshop Notes 2015

Challenges

Immediate

- Funding
- Work for elders
- Elders to be recognised
- Membership Turmoil
- Cataloguing all artworks
- More Visitation
- Consistency of quality Works
- Distance
- Industry is retracting
- Luck of funding
- Competency / Skill Development
- Promotion of our Model
- Diversification within current markets
- Getting Capitol Works Funding
- Marketing at each stage
- Funding for full time staff
- Permanent location
- Higher public profile
- More collaboration with business, local Government & tourism
- Adequate funding
- Primacy of AECG with NSW GOVT
- Purchase of Premises from short term benefactor
- Filling 2 supervisor roles
- Secure long term funding for CFH programs
- Tenure clarification/certainty

Long Term

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

- Negative social issues
- Long term funding
- Succession of plans
- Jobs
- Training
- Recognition
- Greater technology
- Continuous Aboriginal staffing
- Temperature control for Galleries
- Elders to be recognised by peers
- Funding
- Constitution
- Long term Sustainability
- 99 year/infinite land tenure for operations
- 90% Aboriginal participation at all staff levels
- Larger premises to include a keeping place
- More prominent location
- Workshop space for artists
- Secure a 50 year lease + ILC IBA support to have commenced building a long term home for Muru Mittigar
- Local Skills base
- Financial sustainability and succession sustained
- Relationship with Benefactor/ Foundation
- Creating Unity amongst members
- Changing constitution to tailor to needs of corporation and communities
- Successful Grants and support

How others see your Organisation

- Internal Bickering
- I didn't even know there was an Aboriginal Art Gallery
- Lack of cohesion
- Factualism of non -Aboriginal people
- Regional arts often feel left out
- Not enough communication between Aboriginal orgs in the area
- Disconnection
- Access quality
- Existence
- Should be free
- Authority /Generalisation
- Lack of Appreciation
- Lack of Knowledge
- Undervaluing
- Exclusive
- Not recognise diversity

Impediments

- Lack of funding no government support or understanding
- Lack of widespread community support & some non-local Aboriginal Organisations
- No independent sources of income
- Low skills locally

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

- Isolation from potential help/support and great remote operating costs
- Cultural indifference by 24 hour media cycle
- Lack of accountability beyond 3-4 year cycle
- Corporate sector influence driven mainly by finance
- Very prolonged process to economic procurement policy
- Overcoming community fighting - lots of mediation and community meetings, gatherings, activities, BBQ's - open communication
- Changing constitution – scrutinising rules and??? Act to support core businesses
- Support by local, state and fed governments
- Lack of funding
- Cohesion with community support
- No venue available to house art Gallery/keeping place/ bush tucker garden, café and artists
- Training and Skill growth
- Building belief in community
- Making partners work with us not for us
- Embarrassing change
- Managing conflict
- NBN rollout
- Training in technology
- Generational Change
- Funding
- Jobs
- Know how
- Funding
- Human resources
- Government
- Stereo Typing

Key Challenges for ACHAA Orgs

- Money
- Cohesion
- Recognition
- Employment- low skills base
- Security of Tenure
- Lack of support
- Governance
- Distance/Tech
- Skills set – training programs, access to training, Width and depth

Visions and Aspirations

Values

- Diversity – Geographic, Practice, people
- Respect- Culture, Knowledge
- Transparency – Process, communication, converse
- Forward thinking- Technology
- Leadership
- Advocacy/ Influence

Methods

- Training – skills, tech

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

- Governance
- Research/resources , \$\$, RRP + Value, policies, relevant
- Contribution/ROI/cost benefit
- Comms/profile/advocacy
- Engage/Connection

Blue Sky Achievements/Vision

- Employment & Training – opportunities for local Aboriginal communities within and outside the organisation
- Suitable Premises owned by the organisation which is fully funded from Government but preferably self-funding enterprises
- Full access to and management of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Inc. lands, waters within cultural and council tribal areas
- Self-Determination- economic, social, spiritual wellbeing, True local decision making
- Regular Healing Activities
- Community Initiative
- Employment
- New business
- Growth
- Generational change
- ACHAA members fully engaged in technology
- Sharing of skills and experience
- ACHAA members fully engaged in MG and other programs
- Existing centre successful and sustainable
- New centres established
- Committed and passionate leadership
- Effective corporate governances
- Solid Policy Framework incl HR, WH&S and day to day processes
- Strong and ongoing support from community Government and Corporate Stakeholders
- Approach based on continuous improvement and striving for best practice
- Centre of excellence for Aboriginal art
- Fully established bush tucker garden
- Café selling Bush Tucker Foods
- Support and Cohesion from broader community
- A venue for Aboriginal Short Film Festival, Storytelling, Artist in residence Program
- Total Non-Reliance on Government support
- The business model was openly shared and adopted by other business and their Markets(replicable
- National recognition model was closing the Gap
- All communities engaged with aboriginal culture
- Bi-lateral policy support by Commonwealth Government
- Community came to together with a joint vision that people were passionate about
- Our core business created training , employment and support sustaining our language heritage culture and arts
- Our service has been exemplary with an instilled sense of pride and integrity and ownership
- Our new 6 million dollar keeping Place carries the legacy of our elders and ancestors providing a significant education and historical service
- We have gained the support of our generous Government Departments (BA HA HA)
- Great programs that are easily translated into technology
- 12 years ago we had 300 visitors a year this has increased to 30,000 a year
- We used to have only local artists works exhibited, now artists come from all over NSW and some from QLD, VIC TAS and the ACT
- Programs are inclusive, children, youth, adults, disabled

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

- Friends of the ACCKP grown from 5 to 5000, with regular events at the ACCKP
- ACHAA Planning Workshop notes 2015 Pg 1-5

The following issues were identified as being important to the development and maintenance of Aboriginal cultural centres and keeping places by the participants in the workshop:

- Formation of a NSW network.
- Training in areas such as conservation and other museum practices, as well as ongoing support for specific needs.
- A community-based analysis of training needs, such as loans processing, funding applications, conservation, and problems associated with building maintenance.
- The raising of funds for acquiring artefacts.
- The establishment of an Aboriginal State advisory board (it was expressed that this board would have the function of advising state bodies that deal with Aboriginal cultural issues).
- The assessment of Aboriginal cultural items in local museums.
- Access to information on the Aboriginal collections of all museums.
- Sustainability of resources for cultural centres and keeping places.
- The launching of a newsletter.
- The promotion of Aboriginal cultural centres within the broader society.
- An ongoing national network.
- A report to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs on the establishment of the newly formed NSW network and what the network perceives as its role in Aboriginal cultural matters.
- Institutions to redirect the acquisition of collections to cultural centres.
- Media promotion of both the newly formed network and Aboriginal cultural centres and keeping places throughout NSW.
- A plan to lobby the National Parks and Wildlife Service, NPWS, for the change of legislation concerning the Aboriginal sites and the protection of those sites.
- Training in Aboriginal site management.
- A recommendation to both the State and Federal Office of Aboriginal Affairs to consult with cultural centres.
- The identification of all funding resources and the production of a calendar listing those funding sources and the due dates for submissions.
- Clarification of copyright issues.
- Consultation with Councils of Elders.

Phil Gordon *Community museums The Australian experience in Heritage, Museums and Galleries an introductory reader*
Gerard Corsane (Ed) 2005

Ibid Pp362-363

Initiatives - the Association

ACHAA Strategic Plan

Purpose of ACHAA

ACHAA is a coalition that supports a network of Aboriginal Culture Heritage and Arts organisations, so they can be resilient and locally sustainable.

Strategic analysis

ACHAA members represent a diversity of Aboriginal owned cultural venues covering cultural centres, knowledge centres, keeping places, museums and galleries across NSW.

They play vital roles in their communities in cultural maintenance and development yet typically face a number of key challenges around recognition of their importance.

This lack of recognition is multilayered – from the broadest understandings of the role of heritage, culture and arts, to lack of funding and resources and the importance of Elders and their knowledge, to name just a few.

Additionally very few of these cultural organisations have the security of owning their own building. So while place making is a large part of their business for all of them, only some have security of tenure.

Lack of resources, including few if any full time staff, lack of regular reliable funding and lack of permanency become cyclical factors which, when considered together with the overall lack of recognition, keeps many centres from fully realising the cultural aspirations of their communities.

At times it has become too much for some of these not-for-profit organisations and they have ceased operating, only to be re-opened sometimes years later by keen individuals and community will.

It is against this background that ACHAA was formed, to be a networking and support base.

Such an association is long overdue. Other states and territories have umbrella organisations for their art and cultural centres such as ANKAAA which provides advocacy, support and general promotion across WA and NT.

ACHAA has the following objectives in its constitution:

- a) Create a sustainable and resilient network of NSW Aboriginal Culture, Heritage & Arts organisations
- b) Provide and facilitate training and development for those who work and volunteer in the NSW Aboriginal culture, heritage and arts place based sector
- c) Promote the value of NSW Aboriginal culture, heritage and arts and artists to the broader arts, heritage and culture sector and wider community
- d) Engage with all levels of government and non-government organisations for the support and promotion of NSW Aboriginal culture, heritage and arts.

It has a core membership of Aboriginal managed NFP's with place based operations open to the public for more than 100 unique visitors per year. This is the voting membership.

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Arts Association of NSW STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN - 2016 - 2020				
Goal	Strategic Direction	Actions	Timeline	Budget
Goal 1: ACHAA will support its members to build the NSW Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Arts sector	Strategic Direction 1: ACHAA will provide opportunities on-line and in situ for networking amongst members	Collaborative on-line workspace developed for Members so key documents and tasks easily shared	Yr 1	
		Travel costs pursued to support Members gatherings	Annually	
		Establish WWW presence containing info re Members, news, resources, key documents	Yr 1	
	Strategic Direction 2: ACHAA will seek broadest base possible of Associate members as supporters	Potential Associate Members identified	Annually	
		Potential Associate Members joined up	Annually	
		Analysis of Associate Member resources that could benefit Members	2 year	
		Regular events held to solicit targeted support from Associate Members	On going	
		Co-ordinate delivery of targeted support from Associate Members to members	Yr 3 & 4	
	Strategic Direction 3: ACCHA will seek to introduce key stakeholders to Members and support Members' relationships	Analysis of key govt. stakeholders and their potential relationships / partnerships with Members or ACHAA. E.g. ILC, NSWALC, AECG, Councils, Govts, education	Yr 1	

	with them.	providers, heritage and arts institutions		
		Identify private sector investors who may benefit from enhanced profile within each regional operating area	On going	
		On-line and physical roundtables held for Members and key stakeholders to discuss and influence strategies that will impact Members and directly benefit their future capacity	Yr 2	
	Strategic Direction 4: Identify and build business opportunities and partnerships for Members	Identify potential future business opportunities for Members e.g. NBN, tourism, international opportunities from stakeholder research and introductions, ? ?	Annually	
		Develop a plan to 2020 identifying one major project per year which enhances the business of each ACHAA member	Annually	
		Develop a plan to co-ordinate Member's provision of permanent Aboriginal cultural education products to a broad geographic region of NSW	Yr 3	
Goal 2: ACHAA will increase appreciation and understanding of NSW Aboriginal culture, heritage and arts	Strategic Direction 1: Through advocacy to all levels of Government and all other relevant stakeholders, ACHAA will communicate the value and significance of Aboriginal culture, heritage and arts for NSW	Research policies that intersect with the aims of ACHAA	Yr 1	
		Develop a communications strategy including production of resources for use in presentations	Yr 1 / On going	
		Produce, promote and evaluate an exhibition to promote the work of members throughout NSW	Yr 1	

		Conduct themed, strategically timed roundtable discussions with stakeholders for Members e.g. to negotiate premises ownership, cultural policy, ?	Annually	
		Make presentations to Local Government Network Conference, Regional Development Conferences and other relevant conferences	Annually	
Goal 3: ACHAA will build the capacity of its Members	Strategic Direction 1: ACCHA will identify related skills of its members	Members' skills and skills shortages mapped	Yr 1	
	Strategic Direction 2: ACCHA will undertake professional development activities to address skills shortages of Members	Mukurtu workshops in association with M & G	Yr 1	
		Webinar/ Workshops on important development activities such as philanthropy and/or business development, evaluation using community measures e.g. wellbeing, event management, succession / future proofing organisations, collection / gallery management, promoting Member's organisations	Annually	
Goal 4: ACHAA will be a model of good governance to its members in regional and metropolitan NSW communities	Strategic Direction 1: Develop and maintain a strong and inclusive membership which represents all NSW regions	Membership is actively promoted to potential Full and Associate Members	Annually	
		Annual General Meetings are held to which all Members are invited	Annually	
		Meetings of the Management Committee are held 4 times a year in ways that facilitate equitable participation	4 times a year	

		Members will be regularly engaged through the ACHAA communications channels and events according to capacity	Annually	
	Strategic Direction 2: Model exemplary values and practices through Code of Practice, Policies and Procedures	Appropriate Codes of Practice, Policies and Procedures are developed and approved by MC by 30 June 2016.	Yr 1 On going	
		Policies are updated regularly by MC instruction, and reviewed and updated annually.	Ongoing/ Annually	
	Strategic Direction 3: Develop and implement a Business Plan for the period 2016 - 2020	Develop a Business Plan and Fundraising Strategy from this Strategic Plan, that contains financial and performance goals	Annually	
	Strategic Direction 4: Corporate Affairs are maintained according to legislative requirements	Corporate obligations are maintained, including annual filing fees, NSW Associations Act reporting requirements, ACNC annual reports, maintaining workers compensation, assets and public liability insurances, GST and PAYG tax payments and reporting, superannuation contributions,??	Annually	
	Strategic Direction 5: ACCHA will seek and provide mentoring and other supports for the MC to perform its advocacy and business development tasks	Seek pro-bono mentors, policy, legal advice and submission writing for MC when specific advocacy and business development tasks arise	On going	
		Provide professional development workshops for MC as tasks arise, to facilitate the development of core policies, high level advocacy, planning and business development skills.		

Goal	Strategic Direction	Actions
<p>Goal 5: ACHAA will strive for financial capacity from a diversity of sources in order to achieve independence from its auspicer, manage financial risk and implement its goals.</p>	<p>Strategic Direction 1: establish diverse income streams</p>	Receive income from Membership and event fees
		Obtain charitable tax status and if possible DGR status
		Apply for relevant grants from Federal, State governments for core operations and projects
		Research philanthropic and private sector donors
		Develop fundraising strategy and materials
	<p>Strategic Direction 2: manage finances smartly and responsibly</p>	Pro-actively pursue benefactors according to strategy
		Manage financial risk by establishing appropriate financial controls e.g. any 2 of 3 to authorize on-line payments and any bank account changes
		Prepare and present monthly P & L and bank reconciliation statements to MC to ensure risk management and goals achieved
		Establish streamlined accounting methods to reduce double handling (i.e. accounting software integrated with on-line banking)

History

In 1993 the adoption of a national policy for Australian museums, *Previous Possessions, New Obligations: policies for Museums in Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People*, was an important milestone that provided a framework for museums to engage in new ways with their Indigenous constituents, as well as placing an obligation on them to do so (Griffen 1996, 199a)

Previous Possessions, New Obligations can be viewed as an instrument for organisational change and learning: museums in Australia have had to change in response to the demands and expectations placed on them by Indigenous people and governments within a broad social and political context. One major outcome found from discussions with museum staff in the workshops was that institutions that have worked closely with Indigenous communities in developing public programs, conducting research programs or in policy development reported positive changes in organisational practice and understanding on both sides. This came primarily through recognising that the dialogue is about 'relationships, not just objects' (Kelly et al. 2000). The employment of Indigenous staff was a particularly strong factor in assisting this process, something that more museums would like to increase. Overall, there was acknowledgement that these issues present opportunities for an integrated national strategy and closer working relationships across institutions and within Indigenous communities: developing a genuine community of practice in Australia.

Developing a community of practice: museums and reconciliation in Australia, Lynda Kelly and Phil Gordon in *Museums, Society, Inequality*, Richard Sandell Ed, 2002

P 164

In Australia, we tend to use the term 'keeping place'. This term covers a whole range of community-inspired activities that fall outside of the classic museum models. By this, I mean a large building built to professional standards. The examples of this approach are large-scale tourist-orientated developments such as the museums in Cairns and Tweed Heads. In contrast, you find small complexes that are community-orientated and definitely not in a classic museum model, such as those in Brewarrina and Wallaga Lake, right through to small display cases in community offices that are there to encourage cultural issues

Phil Gordon *Community museums The Australian experience in Heritage, Museums and Galleries an introductory reader* Gerard Corsane (Ed) 2005

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Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

Over the past ten years, the Australian Museum has assisted Aboriginal communities within NSW in identifying and achieving their specific cultural objectives. For most of these communities, the objective that was identified as being most important was the establishment of a cultural centre or keeping places within their community. This desire was supported by the recommendations put forward at the 1978 UNESCO seminar on the role of museums, preserving Indigenous culture where:

5. Community museums are set up at the request of Indigenous people;
6. 2. Indigenous people are trained in the areas of museum management . . .

. . . In February 1994, the Australian Museum was granted \$47,500 by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) for an extension of its outreach program for the next five months. . . The program has been undertaken in a number of stages. The objectives of these stages were to offer Aboriginal communities of NSW a broad base to gain specific skills in, and knowledge of, the successful development and running of a cultural centre or keeping place.

As a component of the outreach program the Australian Museum will continue to fulfill these objectives until every Aboriginal community within NSW has been approached to participate in the program. There are about 150 such communities in NSW.

Ibid Pp 360-361

Cultural Landscape

There are over 65,000 known Aboriginal sites in NSW. Many national parks and reserves feature Aboriginal art.

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/questions/find-aboriginal-places-of-significance-nsw>

Aboriginal people have lived in the area known as New South Wales for at least 45,000 years. Many sites around the state show the remains of Aboriginal occupation, or are significant to Aboriginal communities today.

These places are important to Aboriginal people for social, spiritual, historical, and commemorative reasons. They reflect the ways in which Aboriginal people view their cultural heritage. These places carry a relationship between one person and another, and between people and their environment.

Locations

There are over 65,000 known Aboriginal sites in NSW. Aboriginal sites are found all over the landscape, including:

- in towns and cities
- on popular beaches
- along river banks and tracks
- on open plains
- in dense forests
- in [parks and reserves](#).

Different environments and cultural practices produce different types of sites.


Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

The Aboriginal '[Living Places' project](#) was a four-year study, which aims to record places in NSW where Aboriginal people have settled since colonisation.

Types of sites

Aboriginal sites in NSW range from large [shell middens](#) on the coast, to small surface scatters of [stone artefacts](#) on the inland semi-arid plains.

They can include:

- natural sacred sites
- [occupation sites](#)
- [rock art](#)
- [cemeteries](#)
- story sites, such as North Brother Mountain in [Dooragan National Park](#) 
- massacre sites
- [missions](#).

Ceremonial grounds

These are sites where initiation ceremonies, marriage alliance ceremonies, tribal meetings, and other important social functions were held. They are places of great significance to Aboriginal people.

Carved trees

Carved trees are becoming rarer in NSW as trees decay and fall over or are burnt. Aboriginal people used carved trees to mark burial and ceremonial sites. Usually a section of the bark of the tree was removed and a carving made on the exposed wood. These trees are still significant to particular Aboriginal groups.

Scarred trees

These are trees from which a section of the bark and wood has been removed to make canoes, shields, containers (coolamons), and other utensils and weapons. Other trees have toeholds cut in them, for hunting possums or gathering honey.

[More information about Aboriginal scarred trees](#)

Stone arrangements

Stone arrangements range from simple mounds to complex ceremony sites. Some of these may have a practical use, as hunting hides or fish traps. Others may have a ceremonial role, for initiation or other religious purposes. We do not know the purpose of many stone arrangements, but some are still important and significant to Aboriginal groups.

Protection

Development has destroyed many sites, and those that remain need to be protected. The primary piece of legislation which protects Aboriginal cultural heritage in NSW is the [National Parks and](#)

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

[Wildlife Act 1974 \(NPW Act\)](#). Under the NPW Act it is an offence to harm (destroy, deface, or damage) or desecrate an Aboriginal object or Aboriginal place, or in relation to an object, move the object from the land on which it has been situated.

An [Aboriginal Place declaration](#) recognises that places are (or were) of special significance to Aboriginal culture. It gives the land a higher level of protection, to safeguard its significance to Aboriginal people.

Search of Aboriginal Places using the [NSW Heritage Inventory](#) for detailed information including a map, photos, location information, gazettal notices, and an explanation of the significance for each of the declared Aboriginal Places.

Learning from the sites

When Aboriginal places are protected, there are benefits for both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal sites can tell us a lot about the history of Aboriginal people in NSW. The next time you drive into the NSW countryside, think about how the landscape may reveal a very different story to Aboriginal people who understand the land. They may see such things as:

- important food and medicinal plant species
- territories, important sites, or good camping areas, reflected in landscape changes such as soil colour or plant species, rivers or mountains
- cultural aspects of prominent natural features, formed long ago by one of the creation ancestors.

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/nswcultureheritage/PlacesOfSignificance.htm>

Indigenous Protected Areas – IPA's

This program has been assisting Indigenous communities to voluntarily dedicate their land or sea country as Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) since 1997.

Most IPAs are dedicated under International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Categories 5 and 6, which promote a balance between conservation and other sustainable uses to deliver social, cultural and economic benefits for local Indigenous communities.

IPAs combine traditional and contemporary knowledge into a framework to leverage partnerships with conservation and commercial organisations and provide employment, education and training opportunities for Indigenous people.

IPA projects are supported through a multi-year funding agreement. Many Indigenous organisations also supplement this funding through fee-for service or other income generating activities, as well as support from private sector and philanthropic organisations.

IPAs are recognised as part of the National Reserve System, protecting the nation's biodiversity for the benefit of all Australians.

<https://www.pmc.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/environment/indigenous-land-and-sea-management-projects>

<https://www.pmc.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/environment/indigenous-protected-areas-ipas>

Living Centres for Living Cultures 2

NSW IPA Case Studies

Brewarrina Ngemba Billabong Indigenous Protected Area

Located on the Barwon River, the 261 hectare property is part of the Murray-Darling Basin. Four endangered species make their home at Brewarrina Ngemba Billabong: the brolga, the blue-billed duck, the freckled duck and the red-tailed black cockatoo. The property's emergent wetlands and open woodlands contain such plants as native water lilies, river red gums and coolibah.

Boorabee and The Willows Indigenous Protected Area

Boorabee and The Willows cover 2900 hectares, providing a home for one of Australia's most iconic species - the koala. The traditional owners of Boorabee and The Willows, the Ngoorabul people, recognise the koala as a totemic species. The place name Boorabee itself is derived from the Ngoorabul word for koala, boor-bee.

Tarriwa Kurrukun Indigenous Protected Area

The Tarriwa Kurrukun Indigenous Protected Area covers 930 hectares of wetlands and stringy bark forest, home to an amazing diversity of plants and animals. Tarriwa Kurrukun means 'strong one' in the Banbai Nation language, the traditional owners. The Banbai's ongoing connection to Tarriwa Kurrukun dates back thousands of years. The central ridgelines of the property contain a number of scarred trees and isolated artefacts.

Toogimbie Indigenous Protected Area

Situated north of the Hay Plain, Toogimbie includes flat former pasture lands contrasting with eucalypt-lined creeks and waterways, and a nearby floodplain. The traditional life of the Nari Nari people revolved around Toogimbie's wetlands, which are home to totem animals and traditional medicines.

Wattleridge Indigenous Protected Area

Situated about 35 km north-east of the New England township of Guyra, Wattleridge covers nearly six and a half square km of botanically diverse bushland growing on outcropping granite country. Bounded by the Sara River flowing to the north, the land's rocky ridges and rolling landscape are separated by forested valley flats, picturesque creeks and tumbling waterfalls.

Weilmoringle Indigenous Protected Area

At the Weilmoringle Indigenous Protected Area, scarred, grey eucalypts dot the landscape, providing roosts for Major Mitchell cockatoos while brolgas feed around the many shallow creeks and swamps. Found in central New South Wales, near the Queensland border, Weilmoringle covers an area of 3,500 hectares.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/ipa/declared/nsw.html>

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Aboriginal Places

Aboriginal Places are a way of legally recognising and protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage on public and private lands. Under section 84 of the [National Parks and Wildlife Act \(1974\)](#), the Minister for the Environment may declare land as an Aboriginal Place when it is or was of special significance to Aboriginal culture. An area can have spiritual, historical, social, educational or other significance or could have been used for its natural resources.

Aboriginal Places protect ceremonial and spiritual values and areas containing objects such as middens, burials, reburials, Bora rings and rock art.

An [overview of Aboriginal Places in NSW](#) comprises a short history, types of Places and numbers of Places declared to 2011.

An Aboriginal Place is defined in the *NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NPW Act) as a place that 'is or was of special significance with respect to Aboriginal culture'. The concept of an Aboriginal Place was introduced into the NPW Act in 1974. Prior to that, only Aboriginal 'relics' - the term used for physical remains such as scarred trees, rock art, stone tools, and shell middens - were protected under the Act.

The Aboriginal Place provisions of 1974 extended the Act to give protection to the intangible, social and spiritual heritage of Aboriginal people in NSW. Places that did not contain archaeological remains, but were culturally and socially important to Aboriginal people could now be protected under the legislation. These included sacred sites as well as fringe camps and Aboriginal reserves from the 19th and 20th centuries.

The 1974 provisions acknowledged that Aboriginal culture and heritage was a living thing in NSW, challenging the widely-believed notion that the Aboriginal people of NSW had 'lost' their culture and their connection to sacred sites. It was part of a growing recognition that Aboriginal culture was more than archaeological relics. In the early 1970s, the idea of 'sacred sites' had entered popular discourse through the Aboriginal land rights movement in the Northern Territory in which Aboriginal people described their links to Country in terms of belonging to Dreamtime sacred sites. These sites mostly took the form of natural landscape features such as waterholes and rock outcrops.

The [NSW Sites of Significance Survey](#) conducted by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service between 1973 and 1987 was instrumental in showing that knowledge of, and reverence for, sacred sites also existed in contemporary NSW Aboriginal society. The survey team travelled throughout NSW speaking to and interviewing Aboriginal Elders. They recorded information about the location and significance of sacred sites and other places that were important to Aboriginal people, but had not been protected by the 'relics' provisions of the NPW Act. Several of these sacred and significant sites became the first Aboriginal Places to be gazetted under the new 1974 provisions. These included natural features associated with Dreaming stories, for example, [Tooloom Falls](#) and [Cocked Hat Rocks](#). It also included men's ceremonial and initiation sites, such as [Casino Bora Ground](#) and [Long Gully](#). The Survey also recorded sites that are of importance to Aboriginal communities because of their post-contact historical value, including former reserves, cemeteries and camps, such as [Saltwater](#).

In 1977, [Merriman Island](#) was the first site to be gazetted as an Aboriginal Place. Between then and 1989, 18 of the 19 declared Aboriginal Places were sites recorded by the *Sites of Significance Survey*. The other - [Koonadan](#) - was gazetted after Aboriginal remains were discovered during mining operations. At the end of 2011, 77 Aboriginal Places have been declared across NSW (Figure 1).

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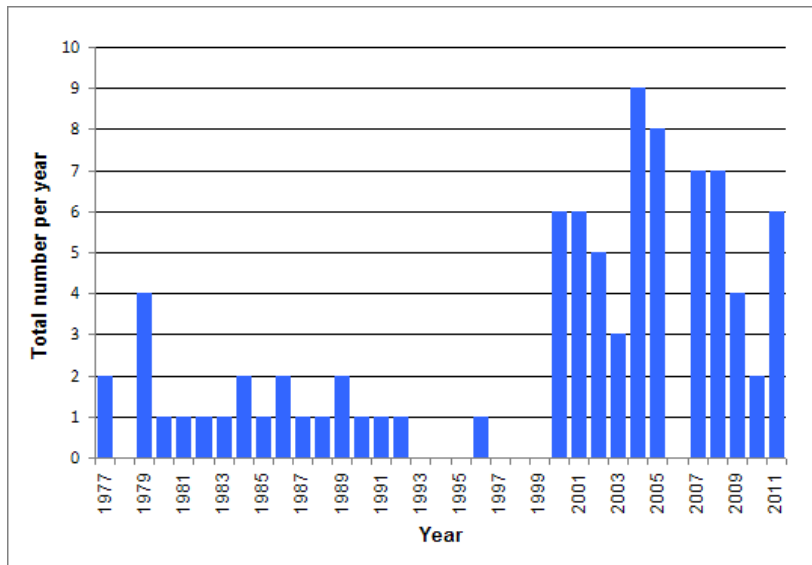


Figure 1: Aboriginal Places declared between 1977 and 2011

Sacred sites make up the majority of the declared Aboriginal Places (41 of 77, or 53%) gazetted by the end of 2011 (Figure 2). This reflects the large number of sacred sites recorded in the *Sites of Significance Survey*. After 2000 there was a diversification in the types of places declared as Aboriginal Places. There was a greater focus on sites of contemporary social and historical significance such as former reserves and camps (referred to here as settlements) and repatriation sites; as well as a continued commitment to protecting natural features and ceremonial sites identified in the *Sites of Significance Survey* (Figure 3).

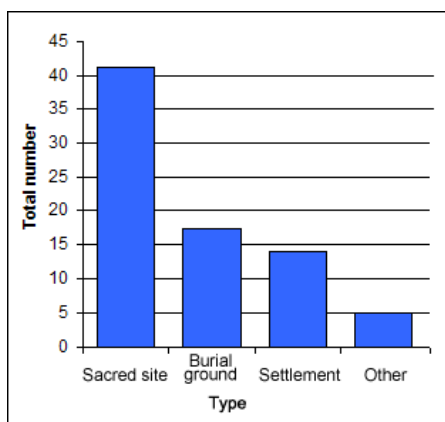


Figure 2: Types of Aboriginal Places declared between 1977 and 2011

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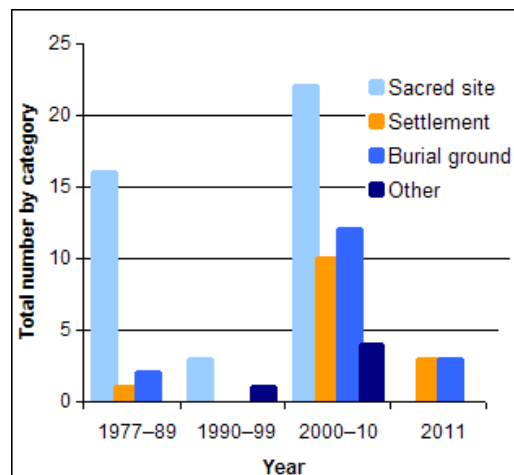


Figure 3: Categories of Aboriginal Places declared between 1977 and 2011

Since 2000, the rate of Aboriginal Place gazettals has increased significantly, as shown in Figure 1. There has also been an increasing trend toward protecting places that are of contemporary historical importance to Aboriginal communities. Between 2000 and 2011, 15 burial grounds (many of which are repatriation sites) have been gazetted as Aboriginal Places compared with 2 prior to 2000 (Figure 3). Thirteen settlements, including former reserves and camps such as [Inglebagh](#), [Urekebagh Island](#), and [Cubawee](#), have been gazetted as Aboriginal Places since 2000. These places are important because they represent the history of Aboriginal people after white settlement, and they often have significant personal value for local Aboriginal people who lived there or who have relatives who lived there.

The declaration of Aboriginal Places offers Aboriginal people opportunities to reconnect with their ancestors, community and culture. Monty Stubbings, for whom the Gully Aboriginal Place has great significance, described how, in 2002,

... after the Gully Celebration, I was back in that world, the world of my relatives and ancestors. It was a new awakening to go back into that world. [1]

Aboriginal Place declarations also protect places for future generations, and some are used as places where young Aboriginal people can be taught about their culture and heritage. For example, [Cubawee Aboriginal Place](#), a former reserve, is now a community meeting place. The Ngulingah Local Aboriginal Land Council owns and manages the land, and holds community events and educational programs there. Speaking at the celebration to mark the declaration of Cubawee as an Aboriginal Place, Ms June Gordon, an Aboriginal Elder, said:

In our hearts we are truly grateful that at last our homeland has been given back to us for generations to come. [2]

[1] Monty Stubbings quoted in Diane Johnson, *Sacred Waters: the Story of the Blue Mountains Gully Traditional Owners*, Broadway NSW: Halstead Press, 2007, p.101.

[2] June Gordon quoted in *The Northern Star*, 8 July 2010.

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