



Bonye Bu'ru News

Bunya Peoples' Aboriginal Corporation and the
Bunya Mountains Murri Rangers Newsletter
Reconnecting Country and Culture

Logo artwork by Maurice Mickelo



Artwork by Cynthia Wilmott for the Bonye Bu'ru:
Bunya Mountains Aboriginal Aspirations and
Caring for Country Plan

Bunya Peoples' Aboriginal Corporation focus for 2014/2015

The BPAC have a busy year planned for 2014/2015. The organisation's Annual General Meeting will be upon us before we know it- keep an eye out for notices of dates, times and agendas if you are a member. If you want to become a member, contact us for a membership application form.

Over the next 12 months the BPAC is looking to strengthen its governance structure and management systems, with some focussed activities about to be undertaken. BPAC is looking to implement a paperless communication and information management system for the Board of Directors using some of the

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Phone: 0448 058 734

Email: BRAdmin@bmrq.org.au

Post: PO Box 181 Wondai QLD 4606

Office: 32 Bramston Street, Wondai QLD 4606

latest technology. The Corporation is also building its contract and financial management capacity through managing an Indigenous Language Support Project. This project is being contracted to the Southern Cross University, and being delivered by Will Davis. Check out the next newsletter for some details about this project.

The other key areas of work for the BPAC involve strengthening existing partnerships and developing new ones. BPAC would like to acknowledge the hard work and support of the Burnett Mary Regional Group (BMRG), as the auspice organisation for the Bunya Mountains Murri Ranger Program. The BMRG are proactively working with the BPAC to support a transition to the BPAC's independent management of the Murri Ranger project in the future.

The BPAC will also continue to develop its relationship with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) and Western Downs Regional Council (WDRC) in the delivery of on-ground caring for country activities in the Bunya Mountains. BPAC thank both QPWS and WDRC for their continued support.

The BPAC are specifically focussing on engagement and re-engagement with Traditional Owners across the Bunya Mountains landscape as a priority. The BPAC have always endeavoured to be open and accessible, and to work in partnership with all Traditional Owner groups. The BPAC also acknowledges that it has improvements to make with its engagement activities and that there are many challenges in developing these relationships. The BPAC have committed to work with Traditional Owner groups to develop engagement model/s that enable these partnerships to flourish.

The BPAC thanks everyone who has contributed to rejuvenating the connection to the Bunya landscape and caring for country in the area.

Murri Ranger Training

The Bunya Mountains Murri Rangers' team participated in competency based training from the 23rd to the 27th of June, delivered by Australian Agricultural Collage Corporation.

The training covered small motors maintenance, 4WD vehicle training, as well as the inspection and wash down of vehicles and equipment for seeds and weeds.

This training showed the team just how important pre-start checks are for all equipment and vehicles. A simple 5 minute job to do the check enables higher productivity in the field, ensure all machinery is safe to use and increases the life span for our equipment.

The small motors maintenance training involved pulling down small motors that are commonly used by the Rangers. The team are able to check pistons, crank shafts, bearings and oil levels. As part of the 4WD training the Rangers learnt how to use hand winches as well as snatch straps to move through steep terrain, as well as how to safely traverse difficult roads.



Using the winch during 4WD training

End Of Financial Year Works Update!

The end of financial year has crept up on us and the Murri Rangers have been finalising their scope of works for the 2013/2014 period.

The Rangers achieved most of the expected outputs early on in 2014 which has allowed for more detailed weed management to take place on sites including Little Mowbullan, Fishers Lookout and along the entire Russell Park walking track. More seating has also been installed along the tracks along with signage at Munros Lookout.

Tree Pear was a specific weed target and the team has treated over 1 hectare of the declared pest hoping to reduce its impact on the grassland balds on the Bunyas.

Gumminguru, north of Toowoomba had also seen some maintenance, with the Ranger team visiting the site and clearing grasses from around the culturally significant site. This work required precision skills to have zero impact on the site.

Track Maintenance is ongoing with Ranger Maurice Mickelo taking the lead in regularly perform track maintenance tasks including step work and track reforming. This is tedious, time consuming work that also involves some hard yakka in positioning stones, but we are making good progress in improving the tracks for visitors to Russell Park.

Feral animals are a continual problem on the Mountain, with feral pigs causing a lot of damage. The Ranger team with the help of Queensland Parks and Wildlife started their pig control program with the installation of two pig hoppers in Russell Park. The hoppers offer free feed until the animals are familiar with it before the baits will be distributed. Regular checks of surveillance cameras are underway to monitor the feral animal activity around the hoppers. The cameras will also identify any other animal pest species in the area.

The Ranger team has performed well this financial year and we are hoping to continue this into our next scope of works for 2014/2015.



Working on the Russell Park walking track



Putting out the hog-hoppers with Sharee from Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service



Maintaining the Gumminguru site north of Toowoomba

Aboriginal Bush Medicine

The use of Aboriginal bush medicine has been used for thousands of years- passed down through ceremonies and songs. Sadly much of this knowledge has been lost, particularly in southern and eastern Australia in the last 200 yrs.

As part of the Ranger program, there is a cultural training element whereby Traditional Owners have the opportunity to share their knowledge with the Rangers. One topic that is always great to learn about is traditional uses of plants.

As with many of the plants Aborigines used, medicinal plants have evolved and branched out into different species which in turn developed a range of chemicals as defence against predators such as insects and bacteria. The Aborigines would study and learn about these chemicals derived in these plants. These chemical groups were – Tannins, Alkaloids, Aromatic oils, Latex and Mucilage. Methods applying these medicines were by Inhalation, Steaming, Decoction, Infusion and Poultice. A good example of a widespread common medicinal plant is the Broad-Leaved Paper Bark Tree. The leaves were chewed to dull the pain of toothaches, they were also crushed and the vapours inhaled to relieve headaches and cold symptoms. Bark was used to bandage wounds while other uses were to treat Rheumatism, Intestinal worms and Neuralgia.



Broad-Leaved Paper Bark Tree

Talking Culture with Uncle Robert Bond



Uncle Robert describing country to the Murri Rangers

In early June, the Rangers had the pleasure of working with Uncle Robert Bond who shared some of his knowledge and connections to the country. He shared stories of the past, how they use to live and also how tribes used to gather around the mountain before the Bunya festival. It was a very interesting couple of days listening to his knowledge and wisdom of his country and the Murri Rangers would like to thank him very much for sharing his time with us.

Uncle Robert's knowledge was recorded as part of the BPAC's and Murri Rangers' cultural knowledge recording and management activities. A cultural database has been set up with the ability to collect, manage, and in the future, share recordings according to the knowledge holder's direction and cultural protocols. There will be more information about these activities in the next newsletter.

Happy NAIDOC week!

BPAC and the Murri Rangers wish everyone a happy NAIDOC week. The Murri Rangers will have stalls at the Ration Shed Museum NAIDOC Open Day celebration in Cherbourg on the 8th of July and at the Musgrave Park Family Fun Day in Brisbane on the 11th of July. Drop in to the stall and say hello.